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The Week

DONALD R. RICHBERG'S report on economic gains under the New Deal make, on the surface, an impressive showing, but those familiar with statistics will immediately recognize that the kind of showing made depends on the period covered. All the figures should be read against the background of the general course of industrial production. From the extreme low of March, 1933, output shot up until June, when it nearly attained the 1923-25 average. This occurred before the application of any of the new agencies (but was partly accounted for by anticipation of them). From June to November there was a steady fall in production. Then began another upswing, terminating in May of this year, since when a more-than-seasonal recession has been in progress. If you want the best possible showing, therefore, take the figures from March, 1933, to May, 1934. (Mr. Richberg has used June, 1934, which is only a little worse.) If you want the worst possible showing, take the figures from June or July, 1933, to November, 1933. And, as soon as the new figures come out, this poor comparison can be extended to August of this year. Obviously, the new figures must be interpreted in the light of their indications for the future if they are to be really significant. Even so, it is difficult to be sure what the actual net effect of each of the measures taken has been.

WITHOUT repeating detailed figures—as would be impossible in so short a space—our inspection of them leads to the following main conclusions. The most startling and sustained gain of all is the increase in industrial profits. Next to that is the decline in normal working hours of labor—a gain that is likely to be permanent. There has been a growth in the total amount of industrial payrolls, largely accounted for by the increase of employment—but not wholly, since wage rates per hour have risen somewhat more than enough to compensate for the decrease in weekly hours worked. On account of the increase in the cost of living, gains in the purchasing power of the average individual worker have been insignificant and are not likely to be permanent. There has been little or no advance in production, if we discount the abnormally low point of the banking holiday. This is the element that determines in the end the material welfare of all of us. For the decline in hours and the gain in hourly wage rates, the labor sections of the N.I.R.A., combined with the growth and activity of unions, are clearly responsible. The expansion of employment is mainly attributable to the shortening of hours, although the government spending program also played a part. The increase in profits is closely coupled with the price-control devices of the codes, which in turn contributed to the increase in the cost of living, the restrictions of wage-earners' and farmers' purchasing power and the limiting of production. This is the most clearly retarding feature of the whole program, and is ominous for the future. A growth of profits arising from an increase in output and accompanied by a falling tendency in selling prices of manufactured articles would be a sign of capitalist health, but a growth of profits arising from wider profit margins and higher prices on a low level of output is wholly vicious.

BEFORE leaving this subject, it is well to compare the progress achieved with the distance to go. In June of this year, before the existing recession had

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made much headway, the Federal Reserve Board's index of industrial production (based, like its other indexes, on 100 for the average of 1923-25) was 84 as compared with 119 in 1929. Construction contracts awarded (including, of course, the public building program) stood at 26 as compared with 117 in 1929. Factory employment had reached 81 in comparison with 105 in 1929. Factory payrolls had achieved the dizzy height of 65 as compared with 109 in 1929. Commodity prices were 75 as compared with 95. Bear in mind that employment will have to be larger than in 1929 if we are to absorb the unemployed, and that production will have to be greater than in that year if there are to be even as many goods made for each inhabitant (since the population has increased). A rapid deterioration of conditions has occurred since June. There are still about 10,000,000 unemployed. According to Commissioner Hodson, nearly one-fourth of the population of New York City is now on relief and the number will have been increased by about 400,000 before the end of the year. Funds are inadequate. We face one of the most serious and tragic winters of our history.

THE first reciprocal treaty under the new tariff act illustrates the mutual benefits of international trade. It will by reducing our duty on Cuba's principal products—sugar, rum and tobacco—let in about $50,000,000-worth more than before, and with the proceeds Cubans will be able to buy that much more of American lard, vegetable oils and other foodstuffs, automobiles, textiles, metals, wood products, etc., on all of which her duty is reduced. An increase of $50,000,000 in trade is not much in view of the need, but it is in the right direction, and means more in relation to Cuba's situation than it does to ours. We should remember, however, that all this is merely a step in undoing the damage we wantonly caused by the Smoot-Hawley tariff, with its iniquitous sugar duty. In fact, we should have been much better off if that act had never been passed, because it has encouraged wasteful sugar production in the United States and the Philippines, which now must meet more Cuban competition. It is always more difficult to undo tariff damage than to cause it. The difficulty will be seen more clearly when we come to negotiate with other countries; for many of them have since incurred obligations, domestic and foreign, that will obstruct even the possibility of agreement.

DOROTHY THOMPSON'S expulsion from the Third Reich for her criticism of Hitler, published several years ago, once more shows how little Berlin is concerned with the world's opinion. Whether the victim of its displeasure is some unknown journalist or a writer of Miss Thompson's international reputation makes little difference. A scant bit of courtesy, a little less terror, perhaps, in the case of the latter. On the whole the attitude of outside opinion is a matter of complete indifference to the Nazi government, though it spends millions every year for its stupid propaganda in the United States and elsewhere. The greater Germany's need, the more arrogant and provocative her behavior toward the rest of the world. The American government has just ordered an investigation of the case of Israel Alfred Levitan of Chicago, correspondent of the American Jewish Telegraph Agency who was taken to the secret-police headquarters last Sunday, where his papers were rifled and important documents seized. Still more outrageous is the case of the Dutch journalist Spansier, a trade unionist who wrote a number of anti-Nazi articles for a Dutch publication a year ago and was arrested when he visited the German border town of Cleve a few weeks later. Spansier was held for investigation for more than a year and has now been tried before the "People's Court" in secret session and condemned to two years in prison for high treason. He was refused the services of a Dutch lawyer, although his knowledge of German is very imperfect. We have not been able to learn that the "Anti-Revolutionary Party" government of Holland has made the slightest effort to come to Spansier's assistance. Premier Hendrik Colijn, to be sure, has his own way of answering such Nazi provocations. Several days after the outrageous sentence against his countryman he ordered the deportation of several hundred Jewish refugees from Germany to take effect within seventy-two hours.

ONE of the most versatile of Germany's many extremely adaptable statesmen is beyond all question Hjalmar Schacht, President of the Reichsbank and all-powerful economic dictator. He began his career as an out-and-out democrat. "I am proud of the democratic credo of my father and will always uphold the banner of a people's democracy, the rule of the many over the few," he wrote. In the early twenties came his appointment as Reichsbank President and a few years later Dr. Schacht was a German Nationalist, still defending, however, the need for international understanding. "Everywhere," he wrote in an article that received the widest publicity at the time, "the War has brought the recognition of the fact that the nations must understand one another better and that above all a process of moral education must be inaugurated. . . ." Five years later the Hitler government made him once more the head of Germany's financial system with greater and more sweeping powers and responsibilities than before. Meantime Dr. Schacht had become a National Socialist convert and had forgotten what he had once preached of "moral education and international understanding." But his transformation was not yet complete. He still carried the eggshells of an old respectability. Two years ago Dr. Schacht still impressed on the great men of Wall Street that they might place complete trust in the honesty of Hitler's intentions. But since then the National Socialist virus has done its work. An interview published by The New

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York Times last Sunday shows a metamorphosis finished. "Germany will not pay these coupons," Dr. Schacht informed the interviewer, "because we haven't got the money available." He added that there was no use referring to German-British or German-French agreements, which recognize certain German obligations to these countries. What we still fail to understand is this attitude on the part of the Reich's outstanding financier at a moment when America's foremost bankers are considering the flotation of a tremendous loan to put the Reich back on its feet. Is it the madness of a nation hell-bent on its own destruction?

THE exchange of notes between Japan and Russia about the Chinese Eastern Railway has passed beyond the forms of diplomatic niceties. Each side openly accuses the other of responsibility for the now monotonous series of wrecks, derailments and attacks on trains and stations. Proceeding beyond words the Japanese have arrested eighty-eight Soviet citizens, employees of the road, and have publicly accused the Far Eastern Red Army of fomenting the disorders. The Russians in return, imply that the whole matter is an attempt to force the sale of the road at the Japanese price. As a matter of fact the position of neither nation can be taken net. The difference between the Japanese offer and the Russian asking price for the C.E.R. is too small to account for the bother. The undercurrent of these events is twofold. In the first place it is becoming glaringly evident that the Japanese are unable to subdue Manchuria. Outside the railroad districts they have no control whatever. The Manchurian "bandits" are in many cases actually armies; 60,000 Chinese volunteers are reported to be operating in Kirin province and an even greater number in Heilungkiang. In the second place there is no doubt that the disturbances in Manchuria are a valuable aid to Russia, regardless of the truth or falsity of the Japanese charges that the Soviet government has lent comfort—if not actual aid—to the "bandits": their activity has been a significant factor in postponing the long-expected Russo-Japanese war.

MEN of science are generally careful when they speak of matters within their chosen field, but often enough they throw all caution to the winds when they talk of things of which they know no more than the average layman. The other day Dr. Arthur H. Compton, the noted physicist of the University of Chicago, declared in a radio address that the progress of science was menaced by "governmental regimentation" of industry and the consequent restriction of profits. He asserted that

> by far the larger part of the fundamental scientific work now being done in this country is financed, directly or indirectly, by men whose imaginations and enterprise have brought them wealth and who have seen in science the work of kindred spirits aimed toward the enrichment of life. . . . If large financial rewards of business enterprise are made impossible through legislation or otherwise, it will follow as the night the day that scientific advances will be greatly curtailed through lack of financial support.

Leaving entirely aside the question whether business men, whose primary aim is the amassing of wealth and power, are kindred in spirit to men of science, whose sole thought is the extension of the bounds of knowledge, Professor Compton conveniently forgets that the United States is practically the only country in which the progress of science is directly bound up with the profit-making ability and the generosity of private capitalists. In the Soviet Union science and education—not merely elementary, but higher education as well—are receiving the most generous support from a worker-peasant government. The only grain of truth that lies hidden in Professor Compton's address amounts to this: that science cannot flourish in a society that is decaying, that unless there is produced a certain amount of surplus wealth out of which men of science can be provided with the means of life and work, the progress of science is bound to be arrested. A decaying capitalism is indeed a menace to the progress of science—and of the human spirit in general.

THE International Tin Cartel has been in existence a little less than four years. It has the approval of the governments of Bolivia, Malaya, the Dutch East Indies and Nigeria; these are the principal producing countries. The producers of Siam are also included in the cartel, and recently it has been joined by the producers of French Indo-China, the Belgian Congo, Portugal and Cornwall, England. In the four years of its existence, the price of tin has advanced from a low mark of £104 a ton in March, 1931, to about £230 a ton. In the same period the surplus above current market requirements has been reduced from about 75,000 tons to about 20,000 tons. In other words, production has been restricted while prices have been raised by the cartel, which exercises an almost complete monopoly of the metal. However, since this is not "governmental regimentation," nor does it make impossible "large financial rewards of business enterprise," we may assume that Professor Compton would find no fault with it. We may also assume that the American Liberty League is highly satisfied with this manifestation of "rugged individualism."

THE Steel Labor Relations Board has at its very first appearance been threatened with court action, not only to appeal from its decisions but also to test the constitutionality of the congressional resolution that created it. At the same time the American Iron and Steel Institute, alarmed at the board's "radicalism," announced it would abandon the steel code rather than be forced to deal with the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers. The argument is that by freeing themselves from the

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code, steel-mill owners would not be bound to abide by section 7a, which must, according to the law, form a part of every code. This threat is reminiscent of the one made last April by Tom M. Girdler, president of the Republic Steel Corporation, to the effect that he would rather go back to his "apples and potatoes" than deal with an American Federation of Labor union. The Republic Steel Corporation has since, in effect, made a contract with the Amalgamated in its Niles and Warren, Ohio, plants. Possibly the Steel Institute, too, will change its mind when it has reflected upon the monopolistic and price-fixing advantages it derives from its code —although even without that aid it did pretty well in fixing prices in the past.

THE steel-board hearings, which so provoked the steel interests, were concerned with four petitions filed by Amalgamated Association lodges, each of which claimed a majority in its plant and asserted that the company in each case refused to recognize union committees for purposes of collective bargaining. Accordingly the board was asked to arrange for and supervise employees' elections. The board's decision in all the four cases, as announced by its chairman, Judge Walter P. Stacy, stated "bluntly but kindly," that the owners had no legal right to be interested in what organization represented their workers and that, as a matter of fact, their very presence at the hearings was no more than a gesture of courtesy. "Why are you interested in which organization you deal with?" Judge Stacy asked. He went on:

> The petitioners' request is to establish who shall represent the employees in collective bargaining. You are not supposed to be interested in that. It is a controversy in which you might have a moral interest, but you have no legal interest in it. If you do not believe the Amalgamated represents a majority in your plant, then wouldn't you like us to set up the machinery for determining that for you?

One company, after agreeing to an election on the first day of the hearing, came back the next day with a counter-proposal "in the interest of peace." This company learned "after a check-up" that the Amalgamated did have a majority and conceded that there was no need for an election. It asked, however, permission to bargain with the minority on a proportional representation basis. The board called off the election and turned down the other request. The Amalgamated now stands free to negotiate a contract with this company, save for the fact that the company will have nothing to do with it. Two of the companies said they would resist an election "by every available legal means." The fourth company held most of its sessions behind closed doors and is said to have agreed verbally to recognize the Amalgamated.

A SPECIAL dispatch from Moscow to The New York Times reports some salient figures concerning the progress of industrial production in the Soviet Union during the first half of this year. Notwithstanding the generally reported improvement in the standard of living, the output of heavy industry still outweighs that of light industry. Heavy production (buildings, machinery, raw materials, transportation and communications) amounted in value to 10,800,000,000 rubles, while production of consumers' goods amounted to 6,900,000,000 rubles. Production as a whole increased by 19.7 percent over the same period last year (when the increase was 9 percent); but the increase in heavy industry was 29.3 percent, while light industry increased only 10.5 percent. The greatest percentage of increase was shown by metals, machines, fuel and electric power, ranging from 22 to 40. Curiously enough, the increase in retail trade amounted to 36 percent, but this is explained by the development of small coöperative industrial undertakings in such lines as carpentry, pottery and metal work, on the collective farms and elsewhere, and the establishment of stores for the sale of their products in market towns. The spread of local voluntary coöperation, independent of provincial and central authorities, must be regarded as one of the most hopeful developments in the Soviet Union, in view of the backwardness of state consumers'-goods industries, but it is not sufficient to supply the lack.

ON ONE of the feverish days in March, 1933, while the Roosevelt administration hatched amidst a flurry of bank holidays, and Commander Art Smith recruited Khaki Shirt troopers at three dollars a shirt, Antonio Bellussi was arrested. The occasion was a Khaki Shirt meeting in Pennsylvania; Bellussi, an Italian anti-fascist, attempted to heckle a speaker and was summarily hustled off to jail, where he was confined for nine months. Officers searched his home without a warrant. There they found evidence indicating that he was a Communist Party member, which was presumed to make deportation mandatory. After some delay the Department of Labor prepared an order for his return to Italy early this month. Now, however, the Provisional Committee for Non-Partisan Labor Defense has become interested in Bellussi's case and has sent to Secretary Frances Perkins a legal memorandum of the facts, accompanied by a petition asking her to reinvestigate the matter. The petition points out that Bellussi actually was expelled from the Communist Party five years before his arrest, and that because of his known anti-fascist opinions and activities he would undoubtedly face heavy punishment upon return to his native land. Recently the deportation order was modified to permit Bellussi's departure to a country other than Italy, but no visa could be obtained from the governments approached. It is a long-standing principle of American deportation policy that no person shall be returned to a homeland where penalties for his political views are likely to await him. Just such a serious injustice may occur in the Bellussi case unless Miss Perkins reëxamines the evidence.

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Liberty for Millionaires

SOMEHOW or other the names of John W. Davis, attorney for the greatest firm of private bankers in the country, James W. Wadsworth, reactionary Republican, Irénée du Pont, multimillionaire beneficiary of the manufacture of munitions, chemicals and automobiles, and Jouett Shouse, old-guard Democratic politician, are difficult to associate with the names signed to the Declaration of Independence or the men who forced the Bill of Rights into the Constitution. Al Smith, who began as a genuine democrat, has now associated with the big boys so long that his name is no longer a hallmark of liberal intention. Nevertheless, the founders of the American Liberty League have done the nation a great service. They have precipitated a much needed discussion about the nature of freedom. Not everyone who shouts for liberty and the Constitution is a real friend of the people. What kind of liberty is it that we really want?

There is no question whatever concerning the sincerity of these gentlemen. And there is little question concerning the kind of liberty they want to preserve. They have announced as their two major purposes:

> 1. To teach the necessity of respect for the rights of persons and property.
> 2. To teach the duty of government to encourage and protect individual and group enterprise, to foster the "right to work, earn, save and acquire property."

What they are thinking of is, obviously, to protect the large fortunes which they have, to preserve the liberty to make more money in the same way and to persuade Americans in general that their best hope lies in the old system of profit-seeking private enterprise. In this propaganda, the Constitution naturally plays a large part. But when these men talk of the Constitution, they are thinking not of its actual words, but rather of what people like James M. Beck say it means, of the line of Supreme Court interpretations, which began only late in the eighteen hundreds, safeguarding as constitutional rights the immunity of business from various regulatory acts.

What they do not say, and what far too many Americans still do not perceive, is that there is a necessary conflict between these liberties and other liberties that are more essential for society at large and more desired by other persons. The A.L.L. is presumably ardent, for instance, in behalf of the right of public-service corporations not to be "deprived of their property" without "due process of law"—that is, by means of rate regulation that violates some hocus-pocus theory of valuation. But it never thinks of the right of consumers to receive as large a quantity of service at as low a price as technical progress makes possible. The League probably wants to preserve the liberty of employers to bargain individually with employees and of workers not to join unions. But what of the contrary liberty for workers to bargain through unions and use them effectively? It is keen for the liberty to "earn, save and acquire property," but what about the liberty to have a job at all? If these men really had given a moment's thought to the "right to work" they would have to admit that no capitalist society anywhere guarantees it. Some nations, to be sure, offer the jobless compensation as a matter of right, through unemployment insurance —a measure to which these apostles of liberty are undoubtedly opposed.

The lesson is that liberty is not a word that can be used as a blanket to cover everybody's desires. One man's liberty may be another man's prison. Men have been more free in the United States to get rich and to govern industry and finance as they see fit than in any other nation. What have they done with this freedom? What are the results? A practical judgment of their performance cannot be escaped by the mouthing of words. The practices of the successful have meant—if we may be permitted an ironical use of the word—liberty for millions to lose their small savings, liberty for farmers to be evicted from their lands and homes, liberty for industrial workers to see their children malformed with undernourishment, liberty for the hopeless to put unnatural ends to their own lives.

What the majority of the citizens of the world now need is a new kind of liberty. They need liberty to govern economic processes for the good of all, liberty to plan for abundance and security. Let the rest of us face the fact—as the founders of the A.L.L. have from their standpoint faced it —that this liberty is contradictory to the liberties hitherto exercised and still desired by the Davises, du Ponts, Wadsworths, *et al.* Everything they want —to prevent us from gaining the social freedom we need—is the liberty of the tyrant, which means bondage to the subject. Liberty is meaningless aside from the purposes for which it is exercised and the persons to whom it offers protection.

Central or Socialized Banking?

IT IS faintly incongruous that very shortly after young Bob La Follette's independent party had gone on record for a new central bank, owned and operated by the government, to capture the control of credit from the hands of private interests, the press should have quoted officials of the Treasury as recommending such an institution. Had the press reports attempted to explain the reasons for this recommendation, the paradox might have been somewhat illuminated, but the officials did not publish their reasons. It is another apparent anomaly that The New Republic, long an advocate of complete socialization of banking, should hasten to express doubts concerning this particular proposal.

That this country has never enjoyed, in any very

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impressive degree, the principal benefit to be derived from a central bank—that is, the judicious distribution of credit and its control for social stability—is incontestable. What we have gained from the Federal Reserve System is a great improvement in the mechanics of banking; we have a better machine but no better way of using it. Thus the faults of our present banking system lie primarily outside its mere structure.

Credit will not be properly controlled so long as independent private enterprise is able to wield so powerful a political influence as virtually to dictate the policies of any banking administration. We have much evidence of the political impossibility of curtailing credit, and the current condition of stalemate demonstrates, conversely, that forced expansion of credit whenever private enterprise is unwilling or unable to use money, is equally unattainable. And our commercial banks have consistently appeared more concerned with their large stakes in speculative enterprise than with assisting in the task of regulating credit. A single central bank could do no better, so long as the surrounding conditions were not changed, than the twelve Federal Reserve Banks.

A new central bank is not necessarily a step toward socialization. There is no chain of inevitability to lead the administration to proceed from such an initial step to a succeeding one of taking over the commercial banks. If, to be sure, the consequence of setting up a central bank were to fix carefully its relationship to government on the one hand and to private enterprise on the other, the proposed substitution of government ownership for semi-private ownership might be significant and helpful. But the fact that private interests exercise such irresistible influence through the channels of government suggests that the nature of the problem is something different. (During the speculative excesses of 1928-29 did the Federal Reserve Board, appointees of the government, originate any notion of curtailing credit? No; it was that board that prevented the directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York from raising the discount rate.)

The really important question is whether the management of a central bank shall be a group of experts engaged in working out a credit policy that is calculated to serve the needs of sound economic planning or men answerable to the immediate exigencies of some particular branch or bureau of government. And this question is by no means answered merely by transferring the ownership of the banking agency.

There is, of course, a perfectly definite limit to the autonomy of any central bank: it must obey the law of the land. In the recent case of our devaluation of the currency, it was no great secret that a majority of Federal Reserve officials were not sympathetic. Congress, however, delivered the mandate, and the only alternative open to a dissenting official was to resign or to carry out the program.

But pressure from the Treasury may be, and indeed often is, contrary to the requirements of a sound credit policy. This may be illustrated by the present situation in the market for government securities. Hard pressed by the Treasury, the Reserve System now allows itself to be used in every possible manner as an instrument of the fiscal operations of the government in spite of its reservations to the methods it has been called upon to employ. At this moment neither the Reserve System nor the commercial banks require any such holdings of government bonds as they possess, yet the Treasury insists that the system shall cram more and more of its securities into the portfolios of member banks. And the system grudgingly does as it is told. From the point of view of the necessity of a large government spending program, this may be inevitable. But as a credit policy it is full of danger. Thus, in an unsocialized, unplanned system, deep contradictions appear, involving fundamental matters of social policy and the opposition of great and conflicting interests, which no mere central banking decisions can reconcile.

This situation suggests the final reason for The New Republic's distrust of the proposal. One can easily see that Treasury officials support it because they want a complete set-up for their financing operations. Note well that they do not desire or contemplate any change in the rules of the market; they want simply to exempt the Treasury from those rules. And there are indications that the compliance of the Reserve System may not last forever—unless, of course, there is a real threat to supplant the system. The threat is, for all practical purposes, virtually as effective as the creation of a new bank would be.

We need consider the question of an ideal form for a central bank only in connection with the proposal for a socialized banking system. Its final answer may conceivably require some alterations in the set-up of the central banking agency, but in any case the alterations will be relatively unimportant. Merely to create a new central bank now is to invite a gross usurpation of a banking function by the Treasury Department.

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To the Finland Station: I

3. Michelet and the Revolution

THE MATURE Michelet is a strange phenomenon. He is in many ways more comparable to a novelist like Balzac than to the ordinary historian. He had the novelist's social interest and grasp of character, the poet's imagination and passion. All this, by some unique combination of chances, instead of exercising itself freely on contemporary life, had been turned backward upon history and was united with a scientific appetite for facts which drove him into arduous researches.

He had grown up in isolation from his fellows and much thrown in on his own resources. Michelet's early life had been sad, poor and hard. Born in a dark and damp old church which had been deserted for many years and let in the wind and rain through broken windows, but which his father had got cheap for a printing office, he spent his youth and a good deal of his young manhood amidst surroundings peculiarly depressing. "I grew up," he wrote, "like a weed without sun between two paving stones of Paris." Up to the time that Jules Michelet was fifteen, the family had no meat and no wine; they lived on boiled vegetables and bread. And in the basement in which they were lodging during the years when Jules was going to school, they spent winter after winter without heat. Jules's hands got so badly chapped that he had the scars all the rest of his life. Living at close quarters, the father and mother quarreled constantly, and the boy had to witness these quarrels. When he was seventeen, his mother died of cancer. At school, he was weakly, queer and shy, and a butt to the other boys. He could not make friends among them; he came to them out of a different world. When the other boys left school, it was to go home to bourgeois comfort and leisure; when Jules Michelet went home, it was to work on the press. He had learned to set type at twelve.

But about the press in that bleak and unhealthy basement, he was building up for himself his own empire. In proportion as he was hungry and cold, so was he forced in for food and heat on his own mind and imagination. After all, he was an only child of whom his parents expected much and for whom they procured such advantages as they could. Later in life, he was to write to his son-in-law on the question of his grandson's schooling: "The most important matter is Etienne. I must *hand on to him what my parents did for me* to provide me by unexampled sacrifices with freedom, freedom to have time for my work. Let us not indulge in false democratic attitudes. The worker is a *slave* either of the will of others or of fate. I escaped that, thanks to my father and mother." And, after all, although, as we shall see, the damp and chill winters of Paris put their blight on all Michelet's youth, he was a Parisian, and that was to mean to him all his life to have been born to a great intellectual inheritance. He speaks in one of his letters of his eagerness to get back to "our Paris, that great keyboard with its hundred thousand keys that one can play on every day—I mean by that its innumerable intellectual resources."

And finally—what provided Michelet with a special kind of outlook and training—the Michelets were a family of printers, who had their printing press to give them a common interest and a sort of *esprit de corps*. The press was to become for Michelet the great symbol of the advance of modern thought, and printing a veritable religion. There was something in the Michelets still of the spirit of the great Renaissance printers such as the Etiennes and the Alduses, of whom Michelet gives so stirring an account in his history—those extraordinary learning-obsessed families who, with furious enthusiasm, hardly stopping to sleep at night, man, woman and child lending their hands, not merely managed to set up the classics but edited and elucidated them, too. So, up to the time of his death, Michelet's father worked with him over his history. And Michelet's interest in the freedom of the press and the progress of human science is that of a man to whom printing is still an adventure and a conquest. It is an essential part of Michelet's strength and charm that he should seem less like a nineteenth-century scholar than like the last great men of letters of the Renaissance. In his early years he mastered Latin and Greek with a thoroughness which was at that time already rare; and he later acquired English, Italian and German and devoured the literature and learning of those languages. With small means, he managed to travel pretty much all over Western Europe, and those regions, such as the Slavic East, to which his actual travels did not penetrate, his insatiable mind invaded. The impression he makes on us is quite different from that of the ordinary modern scholar who has specialized in some narrowly delimited subject and gotten it up in a graduate school: we feel that Michelet has read all the books, been to look at all the monuments and pictures, interviewed personally all the authorities, and explored all the libraries and archives of Europe; and that he has it all under his hat. The Goncourts said that Michelet's attractiveness lay in the fact that his works "seem to be written by hand. They are free from the banality and impersonality which the printed thing has; they are like the auto-

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graph of a thought." But what Michelet really goes back to is an earlier stage of printing before either the journalistic or the academic formulas had come between first-hand knowledge and us. He is simply a man going to the sources and trying to get down on record what can be learned from them; and this role, which claims for itself, on the one hand, no academic sanctions, involves, on the other hand, a more direct responsibility to the reader.

Michelet thus learned from the beginning to fortify himself inside an intellectual citadel impregnable to hardship or disaster. The external circumstances of his life continued to be somber and distressing. After the death of Mme. Michelet, Jules's father was given an odd kind of employment presiding over an institution which was half boarding-house, half insane asylum. There Michelet spent some eight years of his youth in the company of cracked and impoverished persons left over from the old regime, and of the doctors and attendants who took care of them. Jules married the young companion of an old and feeble-minded marquise. She had little in common with Michelet and after fifteen years died of consumption, leaving him with two children. During these years, as a young professor, Michelet would get up at four in the morning and read, write and teach all day: he even took a book on his afternoon walk. He had made one close friend, a medical student, with whom he shared the intellectual passions, which, he said, "devoured" his youth; but this young man, to his anguish, had sickened and wasted, and died of consumption, too.

There is perhaps no more amazing example in literature of the expansion of a limited individual experience into a great work of imagination. When the frail and solitary printer's son came to turn himself inside out in his books, he gave the world, not, as his romantic contemporaries did, personal exaltations and despairs swollen to heroic volume, but the agonizing drama of the emergence of the modern world out of feudalism. His history of France, immense though it is and with all its complexity, variation and detail, displays a bold emotional design which is easily referable to Michelet's own experience. The centuries which lead up to the Revolution are like a long and solitary youth waiting year after year for self-expression, release, the assertion of unacknowledged rights, the free association with others. The climax of the story is the moment of the founding of the Federations during the year after the taking of the Bastille, when communities all over France met together to swear fraternity and devotion to the Revolution. Michelet had been the first historian to investigate and emphasize this phenomenon. "At no other time, I believe," he wrote, "has the heart of man been wider and more spacious—at no other time have distinctions of class, of fortune and of party been more completely forgotten." But it was a moment only; after that, the back-flow of old instincts and interests among the purposes and hopes of the new was to bring years of confusion and disorder. The leaders were to find themselves undone by their own internal contradictions between the new and the old —as Michelet, before making his stand, had found himself between his royal patrons and his revolutionary tradition. Michelet was himself the child of that period of paradoxes; and he was to become *par excellence* the historian of the perplexed personalities and political anomalies peculiar to an age of social change. This idea of contradictions inside a social system, which is to play, as we shall see, such a prominent role in later social-economic thought, already pervades Michelet to such an extent that we may trace to it the habit of verbal paradox which grew on him in the later-written volumes of his history where he is dealing with the *impasses* of the old regime. With Michelet, the typical internal antithesis—which splits up and prevents from functioning the individual or the political body—is between class solidarity on the one hand and patriotic duty on the other; and beyond it, one is always aware of the two opposite emotional poles which magnetize Michelet's world and give it its moral system: a cold and anti-social egoism and the impulse toward human solidarity.

To return again to Michelet's own century, the Revolution of 1848 had come and gone before Michelet had finished his history of the Revolution of 1789. In 1848, on the eve of the February revolution, Michelet's lectures had been considered so inflammatory that his course had been suspended; but after the revolution, he had been reinstated in his chair. When Louis Bonaparte made himself Emperor in 1851, Michelet was dismissed without a pension, and when he refused to take the oath of allegiance, was deprived of his post at the Archives. He was a poor man again now after a period of relative prosperity; and from a position of direct public influence, he found himself alone with his history. "He who knows how to be poor knows everything," he wrote. He had ended the "History of the Revolution" with the fall of Robespierre, and now he set himself to fill up the gap between the death of Louis XI and the taking of the Bastille. When he had done that, he took up the story again at the fall of Robespierre and brought it down through Waterloo.

And as the years went on and volume after volume made the long continuity of the "History of France," Michelet, living out three-quarters of the century, came to impress himself on it profoundly. He was the man who, above all others, had supplied the French of his time with a past. He was read with enthusiasm by writers as different as Lamartine, Montalambert, Victor Hugo, Heine, Herzen, Proudhon, Béranger, Renan, Taine, the Goncourts and Flaubert. He was an artist as well as a thinker, and so penetrated to parts of the intellectual world widely remote from one another and influenced a variety of writers in a curious variety of ways.

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What Michelet regarded as his gospel we may leave for discussion later: his ideas were always expounded on a level more or less distinct from that on which his narrative was developed. Let us consider his history as a work of art and in its philosophical implications.

Two principal problems confronted Michelet in writing history in such a way as to render the organic character of society, of that "humanity creating itself" of which he had caught the conception from Vico. One of these was the nerve-trying task under which we have seen him gasping in his letters: that of fusing disparate materials, of indicating the inter-relations between diverse forms of human activity. The other was to recapture, as it were, the peculiar shape and color of history as it must have seemed to the men who lived it—to return into the past as if it were present and see the world without definite foreknowledge of the as yet uncreated future. And in conceiving and carrying out these feats, Michelet seems to me to have proved himself a great artist and a great mind.

One of the primary aspects of the fusing process was the relation of the individual to the mass; and Michelet's handling of this has probably never been surpassed, even in fiction.

> Another thing [he wrote in the "History of the Revolution"] which this History will clearly establish and which holds true in every connection, is that the people were usually more important than the leaders. The deeper I have excavated, the more surely I have satisfied myself that the best was underneath, in the obscure depths. And I have realized that it is quite wrong to take these brilliant and powerful talkers, who expressed the thought of the masses, for the sole actors in the drama. They were given the impulse by others much more than they gave it themselves. The principal actor is the people. To find the people again and put it back in its proper role, I have been obliged to reduce to their proportions the ambitious marionettes whose strings it manipulated and in whom hitherto we have looked for and thought to see the secret play of history.

And in regard to remarkable persons in general, Michelet always shows them in their relation to the social group which has molded them and whose feelings they are finding expression for, whose needs they are attempting to satisfy. Yet even the personalities of the revolutionary leaders are made vivid and idiosyncratic; they are at intervals brought so close to us that we can note a change in their health or morale, their manner or their way of dressing; we follow their private relationships, enter into their love affairs. Michelet is equally successful in dealing with individuals and communities. The special personality of a city or locality—Lyon, Avignon, the Vendée—is rendered with the same masterly sense of character; and the various social elements which compose it are shown in their interaction like the elements in a single human character. And then there are the persons of secondary importance, like Ravaillac, the assassin of Henri IV, or Madame Guyon, the eighteenth-century mystic, or the totally obscure persons like Grainville, the unfortunate schoolmaster of Amiens, who seemed to concentrate in his destiny all the disillusion and despair of the aftermath of the Revolution—those minor figures of whom Michelet will give us a close-up in a chapter, making us see clearly in the single cell some function or some malady of the body.

Michelet's skill at shifting back and forth between the close-up of the individual, the movement of the local group and the analytic survey of the whole, is one of the features of a technical virtuosity which became more and more amazing.

Michelet first begins really to master his method toward the middle of the "History of the Revolution," where he has to range over an immense keyboard in relating the development in the provinces to political events in Paris. I cannot allow Lytton Strachey's opinion that the centuries leading up to the Revolution are the most successful section of Michelet (the volumes on the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were written after the volumes on the Revolution). The Revolution is a much more disorderly and much more difficult subject; and the very crowdedness and jaggedness of Michelet's treatment of it are the sign of a determination to lay hold of a complex reality which had been simplified to make texts for many sermons, revolutionary and reactionary alike. It was with justice that Michelet claimed that, though there had been royalist and Robespierre histories of the Revolution—both "monarchist" versions, he insisted—he had written the first republican history. Yet in the volumes which deal with the centuries preceding, where Michelet has a clear stretch of slow developments, the great rhythmic recurrences of history are interwoven with a cumulative force and a symphonic effect which surely represent the extreme limit of the capacity of the artist to use historical fact as material. Michelet manipulates his themes, dropping them and picking them up at intervals, as if he were braiding a rope: the periodical assemblies of the States-General gradually acquiring a new significance; the progressive sterilization and incompetence of the Court; the technical development of warfare; the books that mark the dawn of the Enlightenment; the episodes of the Protestant persecution; the series of witchcraft trials which show the decay of Catholicism in the convents. Yet the plaiting of a rope is too coarse an image. No image except that of life itself can convey the penetrating intelligence and the masterly skill of presentation with which, in the volumes on Louis XIV, for example, Michelet interrelates the intrigues of the Court, the subjects of Molière's comedies and the economic condition of France; or the completeness of the volume on the Regency—Michelet groans over his travail with this in his letters: "Nothing more difficult, more dispersed, more arduous to reconstruct!"—in which

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the good intentions of the liberal Regent are so subtly shown to prove ineffective by reason of his inextricable entanglement with the dying class to which he belongs, ending with one of those sharp incidents which Michelet is so good at finding to nail down a situation: the Duc d'Orléans, his reforms come to nothing and himself with nothing left but dissipation, bitterly exclaiming, "Poor damned country, governed by a drunkard and a pimp!"

At intervals, Michelet halts his narrative to give a description of the general life of the time: the habits, the costumes, the moral atmosphere; and he here displays his peculiar genius for identifying himself with each period as he passes through it. This is one of the main differences between Michelet's method and the method of the ordinary historian. The ordinary historian knows what is going to happen in the course of his historical narrative because he knows what has really happened; but Michelet is able to put us back at upper stages of the stream of time, so that we grope with the people of the past themselves, share their heroic faiths, are dismayed by their unexpected catastrophes, feel, for all our knowledge of after-the-event, that we do not know precisely what is coming. Michelet responds with the sensitivity of a poet to every change of tempo, movement or scope; and he develops an infinitely varied technique to register different phases. The genius which has been admired in his books on natural history and which enabled him to render the humming-bird's darting, the flap of the frigate bird, the lightness and song of the lark, the muffled swoop of the owl, with an accuracy almost Tennysonian, appears in his treatment of history in a much more extraordinary way. The processes which lead up to the Revolution are presented, as I have described, in steady alternating currents; we are made to see how things are going, without very much comment by Michelet, as we observe certain tendencies recurring and growing gradually more pronounced in the behavior of different individuals or groups. I do not know of anything in literature more remarkable in its way than the skill with which Michelet leads us, as we follow generation after generation of kings, to feel the old virtue passing out of them, the lapsing of their contact with the people. The great rooms of Fontainebleau and Versailles seem to get colder and larger and the figures smaller and more alone; they are not usually made odious so much as wretched—Michelet remembered the poor queer relics of the sanitarium in which he had lived; and we are finally startled but not surprised to find Louis the Sun King himself eclipsed in his windowless inside room, bored with the old and deaf Madame de Maintenon, nagged by the quarrels of the monks and losing his magnificent manners at last in his fury against the obstinate parliament. To give us a final symbol for the monarchy, Michelet has only to describe without comment the expense and the clumsy complication of the great waterworks at Marly which make the Versailles fountains play and fill the air for miles around with their agonized creakings and groanings.

The chapters on the Federations are rhapsodic; the chapters on the last days of the Terror have an infernal, an almost intolerable intensity: with the overloaded cemeteries of Paris planted unbreathably in the background of our minds, Michelet confines us for chapter after chapter among the mutually repulsive human units, in the constantly tightening atmosphere of panic of the committee rooms and assemblies of the capital. "I have already begun changing the rhythm of my history," he writes in one of his letters. "There are no more big chapters, but little sections, speeding by one after the other. The prodigious acceleration of pulse is the dominant phenomenon of the Terror." He takes history now day by day, instead of year by year or month by month—making even the weather play its part in the complex when he can find out what it is: "October thirtieth dawned pale and rainy"—of the day when the Girondists were guillotined—"one of those livid days which have the weariness of winter but not its sinew, its salutary austerity. On those sad nerveless days the fiber weakens; many persons sink below themselves. And they took care to forbid that any stimulant be administered to the condemned." . . . Then the relief and awakening life of the Directory. The people coming out of the houses and going about the streets. And the great opening out of the scope and speeding up of the pace with Napoleon—till, lifted high above political bodies, we can look out on the breadth of Europe, taking it in from Ireland to Russia, and understand that we have to do with processes which involve the whole of the West.

One remarkable device of Michelet's has since been exploited and made famous by the novelist Marcel Proust. Proust, who invokes Michelet (though in a different connection) and who obviously owes a good deal in his volumes on Sodom and Gomorrah to Michelet's picture of the processes of decadence, seems to have taken from him also the cue for his theory of the relativity of character. The more important actors in Michelet's history often produce sharply varying impressions as they are shown us at different ages and in different situations—that is, each is made to appear at any given moment in the particular role which he is playing at the moment without reference to the roles he is to play later. Michelet explains what he is doing at the end of the fifth book of the "Revolution"—"History is time," he says; and this evidently contributed in Proust, with Bergsonism and other influences, to the deliberate adoption of that method of presenting his characters in a series of dramatically contrasting aspects by which he makes them appear to be long character-histories extending back like the lines on economics charts through time. Michelet apparently, however, had arrived at his method naturally before he thought to take account of it and justify it, in the process of identifying himself so closely with the developing organism of society that he had come to see historical personalities as

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they appeared at the time to their contemporaries, or, more accurately, to give them the value which they possessed for the society of the time. And Michelet is able to make points by his contrasts quite different from the points of Proust. For he shows us, in dealing with the revolutionary period especially, how the value of an individual may change, how his very personality may seem to vary, during the transition from one system to another. So Voltaire, between the refinement of the old and the pressing necessity for the new, is seen first as a clever young man like another playing the game of one of the cliques about the Court; then, after his beating by the Chevalier de Rohan and his flight to and return from England, as an intensely serious person, hiding himself away from society, shutting himself up to write; then, later, during his early years at Ferney, under the influence of his conventional niece, passing into intellectual eclipse as he allows her to establish for him on the precarious borders of France a little court of his own like the one he has left behind; then aroused into violent activity as the new enlightened conscience of mankind to defend Sirven and Calas; then, finally, after his death, when in 1791 the new generation have his body transferred to the Pantheon, rising gigantically out of the grave as the genius of the Revolution which he had only dimly apprehended. So the Abbé Sieyès appears formidable when he publishes under the old regime his pamphlet on the Third Estate; but later, in the Convention, feeble and timid. So even in the case of Napoleon, whom Michelet intensely disliked and whose role he systematically belittled, we see him suddenly, under favorable conditions, expand to a moment of greatness at the time of his campaign in Egypt. EDMUND WILSON.

This is the second instalment of Mr. Wilson's long essay on the development of the scientific study of history. The third instalment, to appear next week, deals further with Michelet's life and the development of his thought.—THE EDITORS.

Why Textiles Vote to Strike

THERE'LL be open mutiny in the mill towns of Alabama within two months unless the local representatives of the federal relief agencies stop acting as strikebreakers and begin feeding our starving men, women, and children. Yes, I mean mutiny—perhaps revolution—with stores and warehouses looted and pillaged." The speaker was in dead earnest. He was a cotton-textile worker from Dixie, visiting New York for the first time, and a delegate to the national convention of the United Textile Workers' Union. The announced policy of the F.E.R.A. is not to discriminate against strikers. Specific violations of this policy were brought before the convention by the Alabama delegation, and their details were so convincing that a resolution was unanimously passed to protest to Washington.

Those who believe that "Reds" and "agitators" caused the convention to vote, almost unanimously, for a general strike in the entire textile industry of this country, are completely in error. The delegates, coming directly from the mills, knew all too well the sentiment of their fellow workers at home. Back in the mill towns, particularly those in the Southern states, the bitterness and resentment of the workers knew no bounds. "The only course open is to close the textile mills from Alabama to Maine—this is the only language the employers will understand," declared delegate Reviere. And the five hundred other delegates shouted their approval. On the convention floor and in private conversations, I gathered, bit by bit, the story of the grievances of the textile workers, of what drove them on to override with their protest the advice and counsel of their timorous leadership. Let them tell their own story.

"When we first received word about the Textile Code, the Blue Eagle, and our right to organize and bargain collectively, it seemed too good to be true. It was a real New Deal for us. The new wage minimum meant much to us. What has happened, though, is that the established minimum has been made the virtual maximum. Thousands of our people earn less today than they did two years ago. The minimum was not and is not enforced. I'll send you hundreds of pay envelopes to prove it," said J. P. Holland, secretary-treasurer of the Alabama State Textile Council. Every delegate I spoke to told a similar story.

Hours of work have been legally cut to eight per day; but that doesn't mean anything to the mill bosses. They have established new production schedules and tell their employees that failure to fulfill these schedules means a lay-off for the workers. The following affidavits, signed by workers, speak for themselves:

> I work in the finishing department of the Gardiner Knitting Company as seamer. The production was so high, I could not make it. Many times I worked noon hours and failed to punch my time card from one-half day to a whole day per week.
>
> Mr. Capshaw, my foreman, instructed me to do this and told me I would be laid off if I could not make my production.
>
> The percentage was so high I could not make it. It was much more in eight hours than it was in ten. Mr. McDaniels told me I could remain on at work if I would take care of my percentage by not punching my

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> time card. I always started to work fifteen minutes early in the morning and worked every day at noon hour and even then, couldn't make my percentage.

A Tennessee textile worker said he knew of cases where people were being worked as high as ninety hours per week at the present time. The "punching out" feature, referred to above, seems to have spread with amazing rapidity throughout the Southern mills. Affidavits and personal testimony were plentiful, showing that in many weeks the workers put in from five to twenty hours that were not recorded by the time clock.

Directly connected with the demand for increased production per person, is the "stretch out," forcing each employee to attend more machines or speed them up or both. R. G. Strickland, of Selma, North Carolina, cited instances of how six workers are now compelled to do the work formerly done by twenty-three. Four loom-fixers are now employed where there were ten two years ago. Picks have been speeded up from 136 to 144 per minute. In Columbia, South Carolina, the number of picks has been increased from 160 to 176 per minute, according to delegate J. A. Frier.

Reuben Lovelace, a cutter, says:

> The production is much higher in eight hours than it was when we were working ten hours. When we worked ten hours our production of bloomers was 144 dozen, and when we went on the eight-hour system, that ran our production up to about 200 dozen. When we were working ten hours, athletic-shirt production was 250 dozen. Now, with eight hours, it is still 250 dozen. The cutters dock the knitters, forced to do so by the management. The charging girls dock the cutters. Our boss told us we would be fired if we did not make our production.

The terrific pressure of the "stretch out" has forced thousands out of work. W. T. McKinna, president of Local 1785 at Chattanooga, Tennessee, alleges that over 2,000 men and women have been forced out of five mills of the Standard-Coosa-Thatcher Company alone. Shanty towns, filled with the victims of the "stretch out" system, have become a standard part of almost every desolate mill-town landscape.

The system of "docks" and "fines" established by the textile barons is hard to beat. The workers seldom, if ever, know what the deductions are for; nor do they dare raise their voices in complaint. Perhaps the supreme example is that related by an Alabama mill worker. At the end of a full week's work, her pay envelope contained no money. Instead of money, she found a typewritten note notifying her that she owed the mill 90 cents. She couldn't understand it, but being a person of sterling honesty, she worked another week for nothing to make up the 90-cent deficit.

A particularly vicious practice which the textile unions are fighting against is the selling of jobs to workers. Bosses may charge the workers anywhere from $25 to $200 for the right to work in the mill. Each week thereafter, for months and even years, the employee must contribute from 50 cents to $1 to his overseer. Of course, this sort of chiseling is not supposed to be known to the owners and higher officials.

The shacks and barracks, in which so many of the Southern mill workers live, are company owned. Until the N.R.A. there was usually no charge for rent. Now all this is changed. The weekly rental is often deducted from the meager earnings. The cost of repairing leaky roofs, broken windows or holes in floors is also charged directly against the workers and deducted from their pay.

One of the larger plants in Huntsville, according to John B. Goins, president of the Alabama State Textile Council, had erected a long row of two-room concrete barracks for its workers. Tin roofs were placed on them. During the summer months the heat in the rooms became so unbearable that the tenants had to stay outside until ten or eleven o'clock at night. Those who were bothered with flies solved that problem by locking doors and windows tight before going to work in the morning. Upon returning home they found all the flies dead. The intense heat in the room had killed them.

Some overseers in the Southern mills use their positions to force their attentions upon the mill girls. This, too, is tolerated by many owners, despite the numerous protests that the local union committees have made. An unmarried mother and an illegitimate child are beyond the social pale in most small towns. The impunity with which mill bosses carry on their affairs has caused large numbers of young mill operators to demand that the union fight this viciousness, tooth and nail. They see in their labor organization a chance to protect themselves against the fate that has overtaken too many of their fellow workers.

To cap all the rest, the mill workers have rapidly lost faith in the various boards and committees established to hear their grievances. They contend that the heads of these boards are almost entirely anti-union in sentiment. They charge that those workers who have made complaints have been fired. Weeks and months go by without any action being taken to meet their problems or consider their complaints. They have been long-suffering and patient, these textile workers; but their day of patience is at an end. Even Francis Gorman, vice-president of the U.T.W., was forced to declare: "The Cotton Textile Code Authority, in refusing to confer on the workers' grievances, has violated section 7a, while giving lip-service to recovery."

Is it to be wondered at that the textile workers are determined to force the issue by a general strike? Already more than 25,000 are out in Alabama. The others are ready to act—with and through their constituted national officials if they can; without them if they must.

OLIVER CARLSON.

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Ode in a Night of Threatening Weather

I

Old lions
be with us now
we clench hands in the black mane
the weight of the great shoulder beside us

Monoliths of our destiny
you who part the imponderable dark of hurricane
stand up

And you great bulks of prairie earth
O bison-men
the solidity of your mass
uphold us

Illimitable whales of all the seas we swam in
sound and go down
until the blood breaks from the nostril
until we learn to take the sea upon our backs
bestriding you

And you, old eagles
vast to shut out the sun
domestic with it
carry us a great way above ourselves
that we may know the little from the true

And the new men
(we shall not think them less)
the young
the abundant dynamos
cranes to pick up the miserable and fallen
viaducts to lift them upon the common road

Great dams and spillways of beneficent power
great beams to be the suns of this our night
pour over us

II

Man of Monticello
pleasured by a cunning joist or a wig or a French
philosopher
a pride of words which have gone into us as deep
as the deep they came from
Old lion
be with us now

Tom Paine and Barlow
and Phil Freneau, the starling of our May
with your pretty little tints of bee and flower
and the stiff heart under them
Williams and William Penn
the gentlest shepherds ever touched a rock
with kindness
And you, old Yankee
Sam Adams of the organizing tenor
(I tell you you would burn for it now
in your sovereign commonwealth of Massachusetts)

We clench hands in the black mane

And you too
Andrew Jackson
though you forgot what pack had suckled you
we give you our hand

Old lions
be with us now
the weight of the great shoulder beside us

III

O bison-men
who died without yelping in the clay Alamo

We call upon you
Boone of the lantern jaw
and slouching Davy Crockett
and the great instruments of Clark and Lewis
a continent to be measured with a plummet
and the nameless red ones piled innumerable
and the innumerable dead whites
drinking at the last spring of the West

O bison-men
the solidity of your mass
uphold us

IV

Monoliths of our destiny
the indistinguishable men
who come out of our earth and enrich it
Lincoln
you who part the imponderable dark of hurricane
stand up

V

The oceanic wanderers
Perry and John Paul Jones
whose enemies had need to be constructed of a fiber
impervious to flame
and the sailing-masters
broached to in the welter of the Horn

All dorymen
and all lost exiles upon uninhabitable islands

Deep
sound and go down
until the blood breaks from the nostril
until we learn to take the sea upon our backs
bestriding you

VI

And you, old eagles
vast to shut out the sun
domestic with it

Walt Whitman
Aaron to the American desert
and Melville, Homer, Dickinson, Thoreau
cloud-wandering and cloud-encompassed Emerson

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Foster and Ryder and the balladeers
the dark men of the spirituals
all you
Old eagles
carry us a great way above ourselves
that we may know the little from the true

VII

And the new men
(we shall not think them less)
the tall new men

Stand up
O monoliths

The young
the confluent dynamos

Old lions
be with us now
and you great bulks of prairie earth
uphold us

Cranes to pick up the miserable and fallen
viaducts to lift them upon the common road

Illimitable whales of all the seas we swam in
sound and go down
until we learn to take the sea upon our backs
and you, old eagles
carry us a great way above ourselves

Great dams and spillways of beneficent power
great beams to be the suns of this our night
pour over us

VINCENT MCHUGH.

Catholics on Birth Control

THE CRUSADE of the Roman Catholic Church against the birth-control movement has suddenly turned into a duel over methods. With the appearance of the Pope's encyclical letter "Of Chaste Marriage" in 1930, the publication with ecclesiastical approbation of a little book called "The Rhythm" in 1932, and the further publication with the Imprimatur of Patrick Cardinal Hayes of another book, "The Sterile Period in Family Life" in 1933, the Roman Catholic forces appear to have surrendered many contested positions to the advancing birth-control movement.

At the hearings on the birth-control bill before Congress this year, Mrs. Margaret Sanger testified before the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives that "it comes down to a safe contraceptive or a safe period, and that is just about where both sides stand now."

The revised "safe period" theory of birth control, now adopted by the Roman Church to defend itself against the heresy of contraception, is based on experiments of Dr. K. Ogino (Japan) and Dr. H. Knaus (Austria) and is explained in "The Rhythm" by Dr. Leo J. Latz and in "The Sterile Period in Family Life" by the Very Reverend Canon Valére J. Coucke and Dr. James J. Walsh.

Roman Catholics have advocated other theories of the sterile period, but we are told by the authorities in "The Sterile Period in Family Life" that these theories have not proved reliable and have sometimes resulted in serious harm to those who trusted in them. The search for a more reliable theory of the sterile period in women was no doubt stimulated by the Pope's encyclical on marriage which read in part:

> Nor are those considered as acting against nature who in their married life use their right in the proper manner, although on account of natural reasons of time or of certain defects, new life cannot be brought forth.

The rhythm theory of fertility and sterility in women was briefly explained to the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives this year by a Catholic doctor, Joseph J. Mundell, professor of Obstetrics at Georgetown University. He testified:

> Recent scientific work has shown that during the menstrual cycle in women there is a period of fertility and a period of sterility. The fertile period, during which the woman may become pregnant lasts not longer than nine or ten days. This fertile period can be reckoned with almost mathematical precision. The balance of the twenty-eight-day menstrual cycle is sterile; it is not possible for a woman to become pregnant during this time.

This confidence in the rhythm theory is not shared by the medical profession generally, by specialists who have treated thousands of women in birth-control clinics, and by many individuals who have attempted to practice the theory. It is argued by advocates of contraception that many women appear to have no sterile period at all, and that the sterile period in other women so varies and fluctuates that the method is not generally practicable, especially in families where the husband is irresponsible or the wife's health is poor. These families constitute one of the real problems of birth control.

For many years Roman Catholics led by the clergy have repeatedly resisted arguments that birth control was desirable for economic, social, health, peace, family, and moral reasons. The population work of scientists has come in for as much criticism as that of social workers who have advanced contraception. But with the appearance of these approved books describing the rhythm theory, it has become increasingly embarrassing for

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Catholics to argue against birth control on any ground except that of method.

In opposing the birth-control bill at congressional hearings the Roman Catholics would appear to be in a dilemma. If they confine their arguments solely to methods their testimony will carry little weight with Congressmen who do not share their faith in the authority of Rome in such matters. If they bring in other arguments they may be accused of inconsistency and answered by Catholic authorities in "The Rhythm" and "The Sterile Period in Family Life." They lean to the latter policy because congressmen are not as yet familiar with these two ingenious little books.

Led by Father John A. Ryan, of the Catholic University, Roman Catholics devoted a considerable part of their testimony at the congressional hearings this year to arguments that knowledge of contraception would result in underpopulation. At the same time the Post Office Department of which a Roman Catholic is Postmaster General was permitting Catholic publishers to spread wholesale through the mails a method of birth control to compete with contraception.

Dr. Latz does not appear much concerned about underpopulation when he says: "Underpopulation and even the extinction of an entire race are not in themselves intrinsic evils. In fact they may be distinct blessings." The Roman Catholic authorities in "The Sterile Period in Family Life" do not appear greatly worried about underpopulation when they say: "Married people have no obligation to make use of matrimony at the time that is propitious for fecundation, and they are allowed to have intercourse at any time they care to choose."

Dr. Latz brings out an important point long recognized by close students of the problem when he says: "Birth control, natural or unnatural, is primarily a symptom. Let us devote more attention to the causes." And Father John A. O'Brien, another Catholic authority quoted in "The Rhythm," tells us that those who fear that a knowledge of a reliable means of birth control will result in childless marriages or will endanger the Catholic birth rate "utterly ignore the ineradicable love of children which fills the heart of every normal human being." This Catholic authority also argues that a knowledge of birth control would further the interests of society and morals by increasing the number of marriages among those who cannot afford to have more than a few children. This is a very significant point long urged by advocates of contraceptive birth control.

For many years advocates of contraception have pointed out the need for controlling fecundity to preserve and enrich family life, and to help towards relieving the burdens of poverty, unemployment, undernourishment, poor housing, needless infant and maternal mortality, and the fear and anxiety of parents over the possibility of having more children than they can healthfully support and properly educate. But for as many years certain Roman Catholic leaders have bitterly attacked these arguments as "ridiculous" and as "Toryism," to use the expressions of Representative Mary T. Norton, of New Jersey, and Father Ryan, the chief Catholic speakers at the hearings on the birth-control bill this year. Father Charles E. Coughlin, of radio renown, was even more bitter, saying that all the birth-control bill was for was to teach "how to commit adultery and not get caught . . . how to fornicate and not get caught."

The following arguments for birth control from "The Rhythm" should make for a better understanding among Catholics of what the advocates of contraception have been working for:

> First of all we have a right to expect that the married lives of many couples will be vastly enriched with values, physical, psychic and moral, of married life, as was intended by the Creator.
>
> Burdens that test human endurance to the utmost limit, and to which all too many succumb, will be lightened. I speak of economic burdens, the burdens of poverty, of inadequate income, of unemployment, which make it impossible for parents to give their children and themselves the food, the clothing, the housing, the education and the recreation which they are entitled to as children of God. I speak of physiological burdens, the burdens of depleted physical energies and exhausted vitality resulting from a previous birth or miscarriage, the burden of chronically or temporarily adverse conditions of the heart, the kidneys or other organs, or of conditions that threaten the life of the mother in case of pregnancy. I refer to psychic burdens, not infrequently more difficult to bear than any I have so far mentioned, burdens of uncontrollable fear, anxiety, irritability, of rebellion against God and His Church for seemingly to have made demands beyond human nature, beyond human powers to endure.

A third set of arguments, which Catholic leaders have habitually employed against the birth-control bill, is that knowledge of contraception would increase extra-marital intercourse and would corrupt the morals of the young and unmarried. Dr. Prentiss Wilson, president of the Medical Society of the District of Columbia, and for many years a practising obstetrician, called attention to what he thought was an inconsistency in the Catholic position on birth control in his testimony this year at the Senate hearings:

> Which is the more dangerous method of contraception, from the point of view of endangering the morals of youth; the methods which Mrs. Sanger advocates which require consultation with a physician . . . and privacy for their application, or a method which can be applied immediately by any misguided high-school girl parked in an automobile on any lonely road in the United States, provided she can count to twenty-eight? Indeed, the obliging publishers will provide a mechanical type of calendar that will save her even this slight effort.

Dr. Wilson also challenged the opponents of the proposed change in the statutes to make their opposition consistent. He pointed out that in the Dis-

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trist of Columbia a married woman, in whose case pregnancy would offer a grave menace to her life, cannot under the law be given contraceptive information. If, however, says Dr. Wilson, because of the lack of such information she should become pregnant, she may, under the law, be therapeutically aborted by her physician even without consultation.

The two procedures, the giving of contraceptive advice and therapeutic abortion, are equally immoral from the Roman Catholic point of view, continues Dr. Wilson. Consistency would seem to indicate that if they are interested in perpetuating the statute which legalizes their viewpoint, they should advocate before Congress the enactment of a statute prohibiting therapeutic abortion under any and all circumstances, even when the failure to perform it means the death of the patient.

Under the present federal anti-birth-control laws enacted in 1873, no information concerning prevention of conception or any contraceptive supplies can be sent through the mails or by common carriers from one medical college or from one hospital to another even in states that have no anti-birth-control laws of any kind. The penalty is $5,000 fine and five years in prison. The birth-control bill would exempt the medical profession from these laws. It is argued by the advocates of the bill that the present laws drive the distribution of contraceptives underground into the hands of bootleggers.

To one unfamiliar with the fine points of scholastic reasoning it may appear paradoxical that the Roman Church would approve of birth control in principle and at the same time dogmatically object to the use of medicine to prevent conception. The point appears to be a fine one indeed; the rhythm method, says Dr. Latz, "avoids" conception, while contraception "prevents" conception. The one may be as "deliberate" as the other, sexual intercourse indulged in, and the motives may be the same. Yet one is considered by the Catholic clergy as a "mortal sin" in a "legalized bed of prostitution," to use the language of Father Coughlin, while the other is considered a holy and legitimate means of Catholic birth control. One method employs the use of mathematics and a calendar and the other employs the use of physics and chemistry.

It is thought by advocates of birth control that surely the Papal dogma against contraception must ultimately go the same road as the Papal dogma opposing the doctrine that the "earth is neither the center of the universe nor immovable." But in the meantime, argue advocates of the bill, is it altogether "cricket" for the Church of Rome to employ organized political strength to try to prevent non-Catholics in the United States from practising contraceptive birth control?

Many Roman Catholics, some of them very prominent, are beginning to think that Rome's opposition to contraception and the birth-control bill is doomed to defeat and might better be modified. The birth-control movement is gathering greater momentum every year. This year the bill was reported favorably from the Senate Judiciary Committee, of which a Catholic was Chairman, and for a few minutes even passed the Senate on unanimous consent day until it was recalled by a Catholic Senator. There is little doubt that the bill would have passed had a fair roll-call vote been taken. The Catholic opposition brings the Church into politics prominently, and the reaction is likely to be great when it does come. Furthermore, Catholics themselves are finding a way around the Papal dogma against contraception or frankly disregarding it. Many Roman Catholics will tell you that the priest does not interfere with their practice of birth control and that the dogma is only for the masses. But even the masses are beginning to disregard the Church, asking "What could a celibate know about such family matters?" "The Rhythm" admits that the use of contraception "is very general, not to say universal," and that figures from birth-control clinics "would seem to indicate that we Catholics are furnishing more than our quota." These figures check well with a study made by Robert J. O'Connor, a Catholic writer, who says in The Commonweal, December 29, 1933, that the average Catholic family is smaller than the average Protestant family. The Church of Rome may be slow to move, but it does move even as the earth moves around the sun—unnoticeably.

GUY IRVING BURCH.

Washington Notes

The Fading Smile—Where Trouble Is, There Is Johnson—The General Millstone —Phantoms of the Election

WHEN Mr. Roosevelt left Washington for Hyde Park last week—after a last-minute delay because of the Johnson-Perkins snarl—he took with him a sufficient number of problems of sufficient gravity to justify a feeling of seriousness in even his gay and exuberant soul. As a matter of fact, he was in a serious frame of mind when he took his departure, as he had been during those few White House days in which he conferred about the Richberg reorganization plans made during his vacation. Those who observed the President most closely agreed that his customary spirits were somewhat low. It is true that he laughed and joked as usual at the press conferences, but there were some who thought there was a slight mechanical tinge to his humor. There were even little evidences of a worry that was not there before he sailed on the "Houston."

So far as I am concerned, while I wish nothing but good for Mr. Roosevelt, I am not sorry to hear from authoritative sources of this increase in presidential gravity. The things that always caused me most apprehension were the completely carefree manner in which he received news of a discouraging nature about the state of his manifold experiments, his gay assurance that everything would turn out all right, his apparent conviction that nothing was worth worrying about. Now that I am told by some exceptionally

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close to him that Mr. Roosevelt feels, and has expressed, genuine concern over the situation, I am greatly encouraged.

Worry upon the part of the President would seem to indicate that we can hope for corrective action to be applied to existing experiments rather than that we must go on expecting the launching of new schemes calculated to divert attention from those already under way. Corrective action, it seems to me, is more needed than any other at the moment.

The tentative form of the reorganization plan upon which Mr. Donald Richberg has been working and under which the A.A.A. and N.R.A. policies are to be harmonized and all of the other emergency recovery agencies coördinated, has now been made public. Beyond doubt coördination is the crying need of the whole New Deal administration. From the start, the confusion and the conflict have been the chief handicaps to the efficient men in key positions. For example, for months now there has been talk of reorganizing the N.R.A. and the reorganization has been scheduled to go into effect on a number of different dates. Literally thousands of columns have been printed on this subject. But always something seems to have delayed the announcement, and the disintegration and demoralization within has steadily increased. Within the past few weeks there have been a number of resignations of more or less important executives, and the absurd contradictions resulting from the Johnsonian management have become more manifest. The complaints really have an extraordinary range. They run all the way from the little Jersey barber, who closes his shop because he cannot sell haircuts at the code price of 50 cents apiece, to the great steel trust, which, we are credibly informed, seriously contemplates withdrawing from the code under which, so we were told, a monopoly existed and no independents could live.

It is quite clear that what the steel trust would like to do would be to slough off the additional cost imposed by the shorter hours and higher wages necessitated by the codes. At the same time it would like to retain the immunity from the anti-trust laws now enjoyed. Not being able to achieve both under the code, the steel leaders, apparently, are considering the advisability of substituting for the official price fixing under the code the well known gentlemen's agreement. They would run a certain risk of prosecution without the code protection, but it is thought the risk is worth running if the additional costs can be avoided.

If the steel business should be permitted to get away with any such plan as this, its example undoubtedly would be followed by every other industry in which there has been a slump, and all the ground gained will have been lost. This is merely one of the N.R.A. reorganization problems, which will require firmness and decision, even if the new set-up substitutes management by a board or commission in place of the one-man control of past and present. Badly messed up as are both the N.R.A. policies and the N.R.A. machine, it is by no means too late to establish them on sound and solid ground, and make of the organization an agency for real progress and permanent good. Moreover, there is considerable confidence in the clarity of Mr. Richberg's mind and in his ability to understand the mistakes of the past. Where the doubt arises is whether he can secure the adoption of his ideas—particularly whether they can be made to function under General Johnson as chairman of a board.

The problem of the General, himself, if we want to be realistic about it, is after all the basic problem. No one knows what his future will be. Certainly not he. About the time everybody is convinced his withdrawal is inevitable and obviously inspired stories of his early retirement appear in print, the General comes happily bustling from the White House with the statement that "the President has asked me to stay."

The best information available is that the President is somewhat unstable in his feeling about this. At times he is strong for the General and feels that he cannot afford to lose him. At others he grows irritated with the constant turmoil which surrounds Johnson and would be delighted if a dignified way, soothing and satisfactory all around, could be found to bid him goodbye and good luck. It is interesting, too, I think, that some of the more politically minded among the presidential advisers are disposed to regard the General as a campaign liability, and to be anxious for a really new deal in the N.R.A. before the November elections. This is, of course, exactly the reverse of the way the General regards himself.

Speaking of the election, it is amazing that there should have developed, in administration circles here, a certain amount of perturbation. The interesting part about this is that there is no corresponding gain in confidence among the Republicans. To detached observers, the Democratic position seems overwhelmingly strong. If any administration ever entered an off-year campaign with greater practical political advantages, I cannot recall it. In addition to the still great popularity of the President, there are the potent influence of a federal machine increased by more than 100,000 job holders in a single year and the expenditure of almost unlimited money on public works, relief and bonuses, which, however pure the purpose, to some extent at least has the same effect as a campaign fund. There is, too, support of the New Deal by a considerable number of Republican candidates, and the absence, on the Republican side, of anything like constructive criticism.

Notwithstanding all this, some ardent Rooseveltians here are somewhat concerned. The reasons are not hard to locate. One is the fear that the high-cost-of-living specter may have a bad political effect on New Deal candidates. Another is the fright among A.A.A. officials that the silly idea of the drought being a providential punishment for the plowing under policy might sweep the country. Another is the feeling of unrest that shows in strikes and labor disturbances, of which there have been plenty in the past and will be more in the future. The calmer among the administration politicians are not disturbed. They are convinced the cost of living cannot rise sufficiently in two months to be politically important, and that the other apprehensions are trivial. Of course, no one can tell, two months ahead of an election, much about political currents, particularly in off years; but most leaders privately agree that continued Democratic control of the House by a big majority is probable, and the aforementioned apprehensions flow chiefly from nervousness and inexperience.

Washington. T. R. B.

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Other People's Money

Mr. Angas Rolls His Hoops—Money to Burn
—The Dimming Hope of Markets
—Wallace Stands Alone

A BRITISH economist performed a signal service for the Hoover administration. Now another British economist performs another service to the Roosevelt regime. Sir Arthur Salter, in his book "Recovery, the Second Effort," published in 1932, explained how recovery was more or less under way when the Austrian central bank collapsed in the summer of 1931; how its repercussion went through Germany and England, forcing the latter country off the gold standard and that this terrific shock was felt in America with such violence that a thousand banks closed their doors in three months, thus canceling all the splendid medicine of Mr. Hoover. Mr. Ogden Mills and his harried chief seized on this delightful diagnosis, made it their own, and peddled it to the voters during the ensuing campaign.

Now comes another British economist, Mr. L. L. B. Angas, and stimulates the flagging nerves of Wall Street by announcing that there is a "boom ahead" and that the administration is on the right track in its persistence in the effort at credit inflation.

Through that exaggerating lens, the Atlantic Ocean, a "British economist" looks an impressive creature. Therefore when a British "economist" writes a book called "The Coming American Boom," (Simon and Shuster, $1.50), we believe his prophecies although he has no better reasons to offer than those Mr. Hoover gave us for his "prosperity around the corner" and many another which writers of market letters have handed out to customers these last three years. This British "economist" is nothing more than one of those Wall Street brokers' economists who, while always pretending to be plumbing the mysteries of the economic ocean, are also to be found supplying their employers with the kind of fodder they wish to pass out to their customers.

Mr. Angas inhabits the pure intellectual purlieus of Lombard Street. Wall Street is filthy with such "economists." They are the most superior beings in the world. And yet they occupy a position, when they undertake to publish boosting predictions, little better than those "scientists" and "chemists" and "physicians" employed by food and drug advertisers to give testimonials and broadcast the glories of coffee and tobacco and sugar and other preparations to the gullible public. Let us keep our classification of economists straight.

Mr. Angas predicts a boom chiefly because the banks are being loaded with unusable funds. They are indeed. One Massachusetts bank writes its depositors and tells them to "come and get their money." They're through. An Illinois bank offers a patented pencil worth a dollar to all small depositors who will take their money out. When the R.F.C. was established by Hoover, the chairman of that institution went to the I.C.C. and urged it to approve loans to railroads to pay bank loans on the theory that banks would be surcharged with funds, that after awhile these funds would burn holes in the bankers' pockets and they would begin to lend them out. That was in 1931. It is 1934 and the money hasn't burned any holes yet. Roosevelt has been trying to do the same thing and without any success whatever.

I do not dispute the point that credit inflation, if it could be made effective, would produce a lift in business. It is entirely possible that by some means the administration may find a way to do this. But three things are certain: One is that they will not succeed by pumping money into banks. Another is that this will not produce a boom—a lift in business perhaps, but not a boom. The third is that any lift or even boom produced this way cannot possibly last.

A lift in business may come. But when any boom comes it will not be from this swelling of bank deposits. It will come from wholly different sources and from a different quarter. It may be just around the corner as Mr. Angas suggests, but there are certainly no signs of it yet.

Newspapers persist in their inaccuracies in reporting N.R.A. events. In the accounts of the action by the National Labor Relations Board in reinstating John Donovan, the N.R.A. employee who was dismissed by Johnson for his union activities, most of the papers stressed the point that Johnson had got a taste of Section 7a "which he himself had written into the National Recovery Act." Of course Johnson had nothing to do with that section. It was written and incorporated in the first drafts of the act before Johnson appeared on the scene. Johnson himself had been working on a proposed act and in his draft he did not have a line about collective bargaining. He was never interested in the subject.

This explains his perfect consistency in being the most active strikebreaker in the land. Johnson was interested in one point and one point alone as a means of recovery. It was to enable employers to limit production in order to raise prices and keep them up. "The chief object of the N.R.A. is to raise prices," he declared in a statement to The New York Times. President Roosevelt backed him up completely in that. The President himself said over the radio: "If we cannot get prices up one way we will do it another." The whole nation remembers that speech. Now that prices have gone up, the nation has given evidence of its abhorrence of this price boosting. The failure is that of Johnson and Roosevelt. They must take full responsibility for it. The President cannot assume the pose we see taking shape in Washington of being the big protector of the public from the "profiteers." Furthermore, it would seem that with the complete discrediting of this fatal and foolish policy and the rebuke administered to Johnson on his own labor relations, his usefulness is at an end and he should be permitted to duck out any way he chooses. He is the biggest liability Roosevelt and, for that matter, the nation carries now. It's time to unload him.

We have had plenty of trumpeting of new measures, new magic from Washington. The President's plan to restore foreign trade by means of reciprocal trade treaties was heralded in eight-column headlines some months ago. I ventured to suggest that this would come to nothing; there were too many barriers against it. The late Speaker Rainey called attention to some of them a year ago. Our unconditional, most-favored-nation treaties, of which there

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are a large number, made the negotiation of reciprocal trade agreements impossible for from two to three or four years from the moment of beginning. Of course there are other reasons. Other nations—except economic dependencies like Cuba—don't want them.

Now it turns out, apparently, that Washington has done nothing about beginning parleys with the important trading nations and that practically nothing has been accomplished in South America to which, by force of many circumstances, such agreements will be limited—if they are possible even there. Secretary Wallace, who said "America must choose" only a few months ago—that is, must make a choice between finding foreign markets for her surplus farm products and submitting to drastic domestic regimentation—now seems to realize that the hope of foreign markets is dim. It might be a good idea to keep our eyes on Wallace. He is about the one member of the administration who makes a practice of speaking his mind freely and talking out honestly.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

On the Labor Front

The Blue Eagle Comes Home to Roost—A Diet of Crow—Some Somber Johnsonian Inferences

IN ANSWER to the many rumors that he intended to resign, General Johnson told reporters last week, after a conference at the White House, that the President "wants me right here with my feet nailed down to the floor." This cheerful announcement was made, however, a few days before the National Labor Relations Board handed down its decision in the Donovan case—in which it found the General guilty of violating Section 7a. His dismissal of John Donovan two months before, the board held, was to be fully explained only on the basis of Mr. Donovan's activities as president of the N.R.A. employee's union. Accordingly, the General stands convicted of "unjustified interference with his employees' right of self-organization" and, what is more to the point, of flouting the very law he is supposed to enforce.

Superficially, the Donovan case is little more than one of discrimination against an employee because of his actions on behalf of organized labor. But since the dispute also involves the man in charge of the N.R.A.'s compliance machinery and entrusted with enforcement of its labor provisions, it would seem to have an important, if not decisive, bearing on his future usefulness in those capacities.

At no time, it appears, was General Johnson inclined to recognize Mr. Donovan as head of the employees' union. Shortly after the union was formed last December, he conferred with a large delegation on the subject of overtime and, as a result of the conference, took steps to improve working conditions. But when Mr. Donovan, a few weeks before his own discharge, went to the General's office to protest the dismissal of another union member, the General insisted on speaking to him "as an employee." Again, when Mr. Donovan led a union delegation to General Johnson's office on June 18, pursuant to an appointment, the General failed to keep the appointment or make arrangements for another at a later date. Late in the afternoon of the same day, however, he summoned Mr. Donovan to his office and, speaking to him "as an employee," fired him.

Even more revealing of the General's attitude are the events since June 18. His reasons for dismissing Donovan, it will be recalled, were "inefficiency, insubordination, and absence from duty two days without leave." The only instance of insubordination, it now develops, was the persistence of Mr. Donovan and the union delegation on June 18 in trying to get another appointment with the General. They had called to ask for the reinstatement of Mrs. Luke, a stencil cutter, who had been discharged a month earlier. When he failed to meet them as scheduled, they felt they were being given the "run around." Accordingly, they insisted on waiting in the General's outer office throughout their lunch hour, though various officials had asked them to leave. This constituted the substance of the "insubordination" charge. Mrs. Luke, it is interesting to note, has since been reinstated.

Concerning Mr. Donovan's "inefficiency" the Labor Board has these pertinent remarks to make:

> As against the opinions of Dr. Peck and Dr. Wolman [they were unfavorable], upon which General Johnson was of course entitled to rely, there is evidence, some of it impressive, from men of standing and judgment who had official contact with Donovan, that his work was of a high order. Whatever the true estimate may be, we are satisfied that, had it not been for the occurrences of June 18, Donovan would not have been discharged at that time and might never have been discharged.

Thus the case against Mr. Donovan was, at best, extremely flimsy. No doubt realizing this, General Johnson and his attorneys resorted to extraordinary procedure at the Labor Board's arbitration hearing on the case. They attempted, first, to exclude all testimony on Mr. Donovan's efficiency as irrelevant. Failing in this, they argued that, whatever the reasons for his dismissal might have been, his subsequent conduct should disqualify him from reinstatement. The disqualifying conduct, incredibly, consisted of nothing more than the usual union agitation that attends such disputes—protest meetings, picketing, and the like. But to the N.R.A. lawyers this seemed improper and undignified conduct. True, statements somewhat derogatory to General Johnson were made, but, as the Labor Board observes, "an employer who has been at fault must accept some share of the responsibility for precipitating a struggle which, in the nature of things, cannot be altogether polite."

It might be possible to explain away some of these hostile actions by General Johnson—perhaps on the basis that they were impetuous and that he did not really mean to fight the organization of his employees. But when the incidents of several months are taken together, they fit with disconcerting ease into an ominous and familiar pattern. They resemble, in brief, the tactics characteristic of hard-boiled employers who, while protesting their friendliness toward labor, do all they can to prevent their own employees from organizing. The conclusion is inevitable that in the Donovan case we have a close-up of anti-labor sympathies on the part of officials who are supposed to safeguard labor's legal rights.

Should this attitude continue, the handicap that it would place on the work of the National Labor Relations Board

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is obvious. For the latter must rely on the Recovery Administrator and the N.R.A. compliance machinery to enforce its decisions. It must have a whole-hearted co-operation that at present appears lacking. In a number of decisions the new board, under Lloyd Garrison, has demonstrated that it takes Section 7a seriously. It believes, moreover, in acting speedily and cutting through the interminable delays that vitiated the work of the old board.

Yet in a number of cases turned over to the Compliance Division for prosecution—or, at least, for removal of the Blue Eagle—the N.R.A. has acted slowly, if at all. The most recent example is that of the Chicago Motor Coach Company. As long ago as April 5 the Chicago Regional Labor Board found that the company had been violating Section 7a by discharging employees for union activity. The company has steadfastly refused to reinstate any of the discharged employees. After reviewing the case on July 30, the Labor Relations Board promptly turned it over to the Compliance Division of the N.R.A. declaring that "this board will not be used as an instrument for destroying by delay the rights it was created to protect." But the N.R.A. virtually ignored the board's finding and, instead, decided on General Johnson's order to investigate the dispute further. Only last week—after the bus workers had gone on strike—did the N.R.A. finally recall the company's Blue Eagle. Clearly, the refusal of the N.R.A. to accept the Labor Board's rulings at their face value represents, in effect, a sabotaging from within of the administration's labor policy.

WILLIAM P. MANGOLD.

Texas Lights: VII

SIXTEEN IN ONE—HEIRS' OIL

FOR SOME weeks I have been making up my mind to lunch at Mrs. Mulligan's, who has a sign out and formidable screen windows, very rusty and opaque. If the screens were not so opaque, I should not have been obliged to lunch in the Mulligan tradition; but the meals are family style, at 25 cents, according to the signboard, the tables are crowded, and I want to see what all this is. Before long I have seen. I am rewarded, however. Next to me there is a man whose conversation fills me with a sense of law and order, as law and order goes; he gives me one of those lively remnants of frontierism that are sometimes in our lawsuits here. He is a skeleton of a man who fills his plate heavily with food, which he eats as a sort of a vanishing act, to judge by his looks. But presently it appears that this same magician can pull a rabbit out of his hat.

I may as well call him Mr. X, for though we introduced ourselves to each other in a formal manner over the gumbo, I heard nothing beyond some sort of Adam's-apple sound and have no idea of his name. Mr. X tells me of the exhaustions of his latest lawsuit, which has run now for over a year. You can't get 'em settled, he says.

About two years ago, he tells me, there was a Negro man owning a tract of valley land on which three wells had come in. The lease on the land was worth about fifty to sixty thousand dollars a year. Not very long after the wells came in so handsomely, the owner went on an excursion to Dallas, where he had a daughter married to a preacher. The visit prolonged itself and ended, so Mr. X tells it, with news of the death of the visitor. A little time passed—enough for the heirs to assemble. There were a number of them, not only the married daughter but certain nieces and nephews, and children in general, whom nobody had worried about until the oil gushed and the owner died. Time, or several months, as Mr. X puts it, did pass, and nothing seemed left to do but inherit. Then it suddenly appeared that there was one nephew who had another idea. If he had not intended to get something out of it, it might have amounted to a vision; but Mr. X's phrase is better.

The idea of this particular nephew was to find some person whose resemblance to the deceased would enable him to turn up as merely the returned traveler and owner, thus putting the heirs at what lawyer X calls a natural disadvantage. After the owner had reappeared three or four times and disappeared, the heirs got the idea of employing a lawyer.

"But," I say to Mr. X, "you have on your hands another Tichborne case, with a difference."

Mr. X asks what that is. One of the most famous lawsuits in British history, I explain to him, the celebrated case of the young Englishman who in 1865 was lost at sea, but whose old mother, Lady Tichborne, insisted that he was not dead at all. Eleven years later a young man appeared, whom she recognized as her son. But the young man was only Arthur Orton; family friends, fiancées, and cousins testified to his identity. After a trial of over a hundred days with over a hundred people swearing to his identity, the jury was convinced that the young man was an impostor and he was sentenced to fourteen years.

"But," I go on, "this famous case in the old country had only one pretender."

"Pretender?"

"Like some of the Stuarts or French kings, who claim rights."

"Well," Mr. X says, "anyhow, what the nephew did was different from the old lady in the English case. That was your Ma sayin' it. He'd just keep going out and making somebody pay to be his uncle."

A resembling nigger, says Mr. X, charged the nephew $135 for the chance to be the owner of the three oil fields. Blackmail, of course, was to follow—put the black on him, as they say. Pretty soon all he had to do when the oil came in was to threaten to expose. So it went on till he's found fifteen men same as his uncle, and the heirs had got my firm working on it.

Well, last time, when the dead man came back and was around, Mr. X had dragged himself all the way up to Amarillo to bring back a witness. It was a man with whom the dead man used to trade at the corner store—he had paid his bill there, though, before he died. So when this storeman saw the nigger, as was claiming to be the dead man, he looked at him and the nigger ducked his head down. Says he, "lift your head up," taking him by the chin and jerking up his face. "If you was the man, you would have a scar on the forehead. Because I give it to you." So at that the man said he was the nigger who owned the wells, and ran right out before they could catch him.

"But," I say, "are they just going to let this run on? Won't the law try to do something about these attempted frauds?"

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"Oh," Mr. X says, "they are after him."

"You'd think they would do something about the nephew."

"Well, I reckon they'll git him." He adds, "And I imagine the heirs will git the property soon."

I say nothing for a moment.

"You are not taking any of the pie," he says. "The worst of it is, some people say that nigger ain't dead himself, and might be coming back sometime. That's what they say."

My goodness! I exclaim, we've gone the English sixteen times better on the lawsuit, and now we are about to have a folk-hero, the hero seen again after death, believed to be still alive!

Mr. X is not interested in folk-heroes and their reappearances. What he says is that so long as there were only two or three claimants or four, 'twas no more'n you might expect. But when it got up to sixteen, with the government and everybody talking about sixteen so much—all that talk like Mr. Bryan—why then it seemed like the law would surely step in, which it did. STARK YOUNG.

CORRESPONDENCE

Housing Policy of the T.V.A.

SIR: Left-disposed critics of the New Deal have usually spared a few kind words for the program of the Tennessee Valley Authority. . . . Chairman of this great public enterprise is Arthur E. Morgan, grand-scale engineer and president of Antioch College. First assistant is another Morgan, Harcourt A. Morgan, president of the University of Tennessee. The Brain Triumvirate is completed by David E. Lilienthal, electrical engineer.

Appointed by President Roosevelt and approved by the Senate, these far-flung thinkers have attempted, in the words of the second Morgan, "to create an economic and social order as an example to the nation." Already the example is far enough along to repay careful examination on the part of those who care considerably about the kind of society to be developed in the United States of the future. . . .

A visitor at the Norris Dam site turns eagerly from the majesty of mountains made to order, to see what forethought can do in the realm of home making. Only a few miles away is the model community of Norris, also Morgan-planned from public funds, to show how life in the vast valley may some day be transformed. Past the temporary wooden barracks where the workers are now housed, the road curves into the delightful new village. There are homes of shining red brick, and others of white painted wood or stucco. Scores of different types of design give individuality and distinction. Some houses are hidden back in the tall woods, others crown an open hilltop. Each is the last word in beauty of design and in modern conveniences. The homes are even heated indirectly by electric apparatus built into the walls. There are to be 151 of these homes, Class One.

The winding streets had furnished only one jarring note. Off a mile or so, one caught a glimpse of some crude little black boxlike affairs. What might they be? Garages so far from the houses? A chicken farm? Temporary storage sheds, perhaps? Investigation revealed the incredible.

There they stood, out at the "other end" of town. Typically "across the tracks." One hundred "cheap" houses, quickly stuck together of ugly cinder blocks. They were segregated from the rest of the community, crowded on small plots, barren of any delightful woodland. Each house contained only two or three rooms. None had any pretense to beauty or finish. The cinders invited dirt. No electric heating in these walls. Just a pipe hole for the primitive old stove. Shades of that Apostle of the People, George W. Norris, in whose name the new community was being created!

A cordial sub-engineer cleared up the matter. All homes were being built from public funds. All were for rental to employees of the T.V.A. but the Class One homes all rented for from $30 to $40 per month. Clearly workers, many of whom received only 45 cents an hour for a 30-hour week, could not pay such rentals. Hence the cinder-block boxes, which workers' families might inhabit for only $14 a month. They were sufficiently out at one side so as not to spoil the planned landscaping of the model town. True, any children who lived there would be a mile or more away from the model school and community center. But there were plans for a trade school over near Poverty Row. There would be poultry yards near these houses, too.

He misunderstood my polite murmur about segregation. "Oh no! This is a white town. We employ Negroes on the dam in proportion to their numbers in this neighborhood, but there are not many of them, and they will not be allowed to live in this community."

I explained that I was concerned as much over segregated proletariat as over race problems. "But you see," he explained patiently and with very little condescension, "there is no compulsion. Anyone is free to live in whichever kind of house he wants to."

Perhaps the engineering mind does have its limitations. The "example to the nation" may have social implications which neither Morgan would welcome. But the assumptions made explicit in the polished brick and cinder blocks of Norris ought to be salutary evidence for those citizens who like to think that, "In America, we don't have classes, as they do in Europe."

GOODWIN WATSON.

New York City.

SIR: The "temporary wooden barracks" are well built, permanent structures including dormitories in which two men occupy one room, with access to showers and adequate toilet facilities, as well as an attractive, airy, well equipped dining room, a recreation hall, class rooms and meeting rooms, library and reading rooms, and an assembly room and moving-picture room. There are tennis courts and other recreation facilities. When the dam is finished, these buildings will become a permanent part of the community. The place is neatly landscaped and is kept scrupulously clean.

The houses are not black. It would seem to be a simple matter for anyone to distinguish between raw building materials and the finished structure. The color scheme for the finished houses has been worked out by a committee of architects and landscape architects to provide harmony and interesting variety. When finished and landscaped, the group will be attractive.

The successful use of cinder concrete is one of the most important developments in our very extensive study of economical house construction. The heat conductivity is only a third that of brick, so that the houses are cooler in summer and warmer in winter. This is especially important to avoid heat losses where electric heating is used. When suitably painted, the texture is pleasing for both outside and inside finish. Fireproofness is a decided asset.

The statement that the low-cost houses are mostly two or three rooms is simply inaccurate. They are all of four or five rooms, except where, for convenience and better ventilation, the kitchen and living rooms are not separated. Some of the earlier-built houses Mr. Watson criticizes as higher priced and exclusive have only three rooms. The least expensive type of structure is a fireproof, four-room house with bathroom and small central hall, and fireplace for wood, located on a lot fifty feet wide by one or two hundred feet deep. In a city, this size of lot would be used for a $10,000 house. The high cost of public service—streets, water lines, sewers and electric lines—makes larger lots too expensive. The cost of the land itself is a minor item.

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The rent of these fireproof four-room houses will vary from $14 to $18 a month. For an additional $5 a month, an electric cooking range, an electric refrigerator, an electric water heater, and two portable electric house heaters will be provided. Electric power rates for these houses range from three cents a kilowatt hour down to less than half a cent for heating, as compared with three to seven cents, I believe, in New York City. Openings for stoves are provided as an alternative to electric heat if the latter should prove too expensive. There are also some finely located apartments. An apartment with four good-sized rooms, both central steam heat and hot water, and with electric refrigerator, electric range and janitor service furnished, rents for $22 a month. This rent will maintain and amortize the buildings and pay for governmental services other than water and electricity.

Mr. Watson speaks of the houses as looking like boxes or chicken coops. He saw the partly built houses. In fact, our architects have spent more time in the design of these small houses than in any other part of the building program. For simplicity and economy of design and construction, for utmost convenience in housekeeping, and for attractive exteriors, we believe our small four-room houses are a distinct contribution to the design of small houses. Copies of the plans will be furnished your readers at 25 cents for each type.

Mr. Watson says that while the better houses are built in the woods, these smaller houses are built in the open. Here again simple accuracy is missing. In both types of houses some are in the woods and some in the open, and the proportions are not greatly different in each case. Some of the finest wooded building sites in Norris are occupied by these less expensive houses. Also, Mr. Watson speaks of the two types of houses being segregated. Had he looked about him he would have seen materials being distributed for constructing these smaller houses among the larger ones all over the town. All the lowest priced four-room houses are distributed among the largest ones. The group Mr. Watson saw is a group of an intermediate type.

A word may be appropriate as to the reason for "larger" and "smaller" houses. It was a radical departure to build a permanent, well built town instead of a temporary construction camp as a part of a dam-building program. The possible appropriation for that purpose was definitely limited. I instructed the architects to work out a program of low-cost, attractive housing. When the first group of houses was under way, it became apparent that, largely through increasing cost of materials and through the policy of setting wages much in advance of those that had prevailed in the region, and partly because of a tendency to more expensive design on the part of the architects, the houses were going to cost more than double the amount appropriated. This would mean that only half as many workmen could have houses, and that a larger number would be separated from their families for long periods. I therefore ordered a revision of the program to bring it within possible limits. The second group of houses, while more economical, were still more than the appropriation would allow, and so a third attempt was made. We now have achieved a very attractive four-room house, some made of native stone, some of wood, and some of cinder concrete, costing $2,500 to $2,800 each, including all utilities. The difference in sizes of houses came through the progressive development of the program and not through a desire to have different levels of living. I am personally disappointed at the range in expense, as I had determined that there should be no class differences in the community, and that differences in size should be determined largely by varying sizes of family or other practical considerations. My own family occupies one of the five-room houses. But for the need of somewhat more space for many official guests, we should find one of the somewhat smaller five-room cinder concrete houses adequate for our needs, and a convenient and satisfactory residence. . . .

The inherent difficulties in giving design and human quality to a large undertaking are very great. The housing project at Norris is one of a hundred or more projects included in the Tennessee Valley Authority program. Some of these include vast constructions bristling with technical difficulties. Matters of policy, finance, personnel, engineering, geology, organization, forestry, soil erosion, working out suitable industrial conditions for new industries, and a thousand other issues, must be handled simultaneously. It is not surprising that more than one effort was necessary to bring the housing program into perspective with the whole undertaking. A person of practical judgment will realize these conditions.

The Tennessee Valley Authority came into existence on June 16, 1933. In the months which have intervened, a remarkably able personnel has been developed, an extensive program of engineering construction and economic and social design has been matured, two of the country's great engineering projects are more than a quarter completed, and policies and programs are well on the way to development. As one item of this program, the town of Norris is altogether one of the finest housing projects in America and has been so recognized by some of America's foremost authorities in housing. To build on a more expensive scale would mean that a larger number of workmen would be without adequate housing, in order that a more striking housing program might win the approval of men who have not got down to realities or to a quantitative measure of economic possibilities.

We are engaged in time studies to arrive at a judgment of the size of houses a workman can afford to live in, based on a finding of the number of man hours of workmen's time required to build it, with all interest and profit eliminated. If by a reasonable application of "Engels' Law" we can at the same time decide what part of a working man's time or income can be wisely invested in housing, we may get a rough measure of the character of housing that the average American has a right to demand without exceeding his quota of the total national resources. Such an inquiry, even though difficult and not wholly satisfactory, may supply a better basis for judgment than casual opinion.

ARTHUR E. MORGAN,
Chairman of the Board,
Tennessee Valley Authority.

Washington, D. C.

P. S. I consider Mr. Watson's remarks inapplicable to the situation in the village of Norris. However, I must add that at Wheeler Dam in Alabama he would have found a situation apparently justifying his vigorous criticism.

There we have built about a dozen excellent permanent houses for the technical members of the staff who will operate the Wheeler Dam. Just across the field and in plain sight, is a row of little one-story cottages, indistinguishable from a mining village. The distinction between the two is very striking. I will not take the space to discuss the reason for this contrast, except to say that after being used as living places for workmen on the dam, these small cottages and their settlements may be turned into subsistence homesteads, and more substantial houses built as a part of the permanent water-power investment.

A. E. M.

Teachers for Academic Freedom

SIR: During the last few years a small number of teachers who had fought bravely and openly against retrenchment in education have lost their jobs and with that their only means of livelihood. Their fate revealed a serious weakness in the organization of teachers in defense of their interests. Despite many teacher organizations, there was not one which had as its primary purpose the financial relief and legal defense of teachers unjustly dismissed.

To fill this gap, we have organized the Teachers' League for Academic Freedom. Our aims are to advance the cause of academic freedom in a very practical way. Any teacher who shall be punished for his political or academic views, or for too militant a defense of teachers' standards, will be able to come to us for financial help and legal defense. We have already during the last five months expended close to $600 in aiding Mrs. Silver, Mrs. Burroughs and Mr. Begun, three dismissed teachers.

We wish to appeal to all teachers and teachers' organizations to sink all factional differences and coöperate with us in this one specific aim. It is only with the help of the whole teaching staff that we can make our league a powerful force for the advancement of academic freedom in our public-school system.

HYMAN FROMOWITZ, Chairman,
Teachers' League for Academic Freedom.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Malthus Was Wrong

AFTER the War, Malthusianism once more became fashionable among the prophets of dole. "Malthus," said John Maynard Keynes, "disclosed a Devil. For half a century he was chained up and out of sight. Now perhaps we have loosed him again."

He was of course the devil of overpopulation. Malthus believed that the inhabitants of any country increased till they reached the starvation limit. He believed that population naturally tended to double every twenty-five years, growing by the geometrical series 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, etc. On the other hand, the supply of food was augmented slowly, and one could hope at the very best that it would grow in twenty-five-year periods by the arithmetical series 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc. Thus, at the end of 300 years, the ratio of people to food supply would be 4,096:13, a manifestly impossible state of affairs. The whole world would have been ravaged, long before that time, by famine and pestilence and by wars among nations struggling, not for glory, but simply for bread and meat. Malthus also said that his principle would "account for much of that poverty and misery observable among the lower classes of people in every nation, and for those reiterated failures of the higher classes to relieve them." Public and private charity aggravated the situation by keeping alive people who would be better dead. Obstinately, willfully, the lower classes went on reproducing themselves—and this aspect of the Malthusian devil was especially calculated to frighten childless aristocrats.

But the devil has been chained now—or rather, since he has withered away to a very small devil indeed, he has been put into a bottle and the bottle sealed with a heavy lead seal and sunk to the depths of ocean. It may be a thousand or ten thousand years before it pops up again.

Researches in three separate fields have shown that Malthus was wrong about food supply, wrong about population and wrong, too—or at least totally unscientific—in his implied belief that factory hands and cottagers were biologically less fitted for parenthood than men and women of the upper classes. "The theoretical implications of his views," says Dr. Enid Charles, "are of interest only to the historian of human error." Her own book, "The Twilight of Parenthood,"[1] should be of present interest to almost everybody. It isn't very well written, it contains two or three technical passages hard to follow (she advises the lay reader to skip them), but it is full of good sense and sharp maternal humor. Its chief value is that it brings together in a form accessible to the general public the results of recent studies in the three sciences of agrobiology, population and genetics, and shows their common bearing on the future of men on this planet.

Instead of writing a book review, I should like to turn this space over to the author and simply summarize her more important conclusions.

The Agricultural Revolution.—Dr. Charles believes that the study of human populations and their growth "belongs rightly to the inductive science of ecology." This in turn might be defined as the branch of biology that deals with the interrelations and limiting factors of a life community formed of several species existing in a common environment. In any such community—including the worldwide community that man inhabits—the growth of one species is limited by the growth of others. Thus, carnivorous animals depend for their supply of food on the grass-eating animals, and these depend on the green vegetation, and this depends on the nitrogen-fixing bacteria in the soil, and these in turn operate partly on the simple nitrogen compounds liberated by the decaying bodies of wolves and hawks and sheep—the whole life of the community forms a closed circle. Recently, however, man has introduced a new factor. He has learned to extract nitrogen from the air, thus supplementing the work of the nitrogen-fixing bacteria and making it possible to increase the amount of life at every level. He has changed the closed circle into a spiral.

But this is only a single example of the way in which man is altering the ecology of his world. In our own time he has proved himself capable of doing something that the nineteenth-century economists said was impossible—that is, of making *biological inventions*. Thus, the Dutch in Java invented a new variety of sugar cane that yields four times as much as the older varieties. There are new types of wheat, corn, fruit, vegetables, new means of making them grow and of fighting the pests that attack them. To quote Dr. Charles, "It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that the world's food production could be increased many times without increasing the area of cultivation, if mankind exploited to the fullest extent all the scientific knowledge already available." In relation to the food that can be produced there by modern agricultural methods, no modern country is overpopulated.

Similar conclusions are stated in a more sensational manner by O. W. Willcox in another book recently published, "Reshaping Agriculture" (Norton, $2). Willcox believes that, with proper fertilization and irrigation, the eight principal crops of the United States could be raised in one-sixth of the present area devoted to them, and with one-sixth as many farmers. He believes that the seven million inhabitants of Greater New York could obtain all the food they need for a balanced ration from 309 square miles reclaimed from the Florida Everglades—that is, from an area exactly as large as the five metropolitan boroughs. At this rate, which calls for maximum yields, one square mile would feed (and partly clothe and house) 22,432 people. Allowing 30 percent for possible crop failures, 15,000 people could be fed from each square mile, and 8,333 square miles would be enough to support the population of the entire country.

Willcox likes to terrify his readers with figures; he might be described as a Technocrat of agriculture. But he does make clear that we are now in the midst of an agricultural revolution comparable in scope with the industrial revolution of the last two centuries The industrial revolution began at a time when markets could be expanded. The trouble with the agricultural revolution is that there aren't enough mouths to feed. The population of the world is no longer growing at its old rate, and the population of the United States and northern and western Europe is probably on the point of declining.

The Twilight of Parenthood.—"Naturally," says Dr. Charles, "it is difficult for most people to accept the conclusion that populations are likely to decline so long as they

[1] The Twilight of Parenthood, by Enid Charles. New York: to be published on September 4 by W. W. Norton and Company. 232 pages. $2.50.

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are actually increasing." It happens that the crude birth rate in Great Britain, Germany and the United States is higher even today than the crude death rate. But these statistics do not reveal the important fact whether or not the populations of these countries are reproducing themselves. In order to compute the actual rate of fertility, Dr. Robert Kuczynski of the Brookings Institution some years ago developed a new statistical method which has affected the whole theory of population. Essentially his method consists in disregarding the males and all the women past the age of reproduction; he counts only the potential mothers, their female children per thousand potential mothers (this gives the "gross reproduction rate") and the female children their surviving daughters will have if the birth rate does not change (this gives the "net reproduction rate"). Any population in which the gross reproduction rate is less than unity is certain to decrease unless it is replenished by immigration. Any population in which the net reproduction rate is less than unity will decrease eventually unless immigrants come or the birth rate rises.

Kuczynski's figures, which Dr. Charles quotes, show that by the year 1927 the gross reproduction rate had fallen to 1.10 in France, to 1.00 in Germany, to 0.98 in England; while the net reproduction rates for the three countries were 0.91, 0.83 and 0.82 respectively. The net reproduction rate for the United States fell to 1.00 in 1926 and since then has continued falling. In all these nations, says Dr. Charles, "the population has already ceased to be capable of maintaining its numbers. . . . No change in the risk of death short of a recipe for immortality can avert ultimate extinction if fertility remains at its present level." Japan, Italy and Russia have high reproduction rates, gross and net, but in the two former countries the rates are falling. Only Russia among the white nations gives promise of a continued growth in population.

Is the Quality of the Racial Stock Deteriorating?—Within a country like Great Britain or the United States, the different social groups and classes show different birth rates. Country people have more children than city people, Catholics more than Protestants and, in general, the poor more than the rich. Believers in eugenics have been alarmed by this situation: they are afraid that the intelligent class to which they belong will be overwhelmed by the great unwashed mob. But, says Dr. Charles, "concern about degeneration in the quality of the population is without sufficient basis, for two reasons. One is that there is insufficient evidence of significant differences distinguishing social classes with different fertility rates." In other words, there is no scientific proof that the children of a professor would be brighter than the children of a stevedore, if both were reared in the same environment. "The other is that such differences between fertility rates seem likely to become less pronounced." In other words, the poor are imitating their masters by having fewer children. And this introduces a real danger that the eugenists have overlooked—namely, that the perfecting of birth-control methods and the wider knowledge of them among the masses will lead to a birth rate declining still more rapidly than at present.

Sterility: Its Cause and Cure.—Yet Dr. Charles does not believe that birth control is the cause of declining fertility; it is merely one of the agencies by which this result has been brought about. A campaign against birth control would merely increase the use of other agencies (and particularly of abortion). The real causes of low birth rates are economic, she thinks, and are closely connected with two features of the system under which we live. To the poorer classes, children are no longer an economic asset; they cannot earn money for their parents; they have to be fed and clothed and sent to school at a sacrifice in living standards. To the richer classes, children are a hindrance in the process of "getting on in the world"; a childless diplomat or scientist or lawyer can seize more opportunities for professional advancement and maintain a higher social position than one burdened with a family. Successful men set the fashion for others—"Social promotion favors the sterility of a class which has imposed its mores on the rest of the community. . . . By all sections of the Acquisitive Society children have now come to be regarded as a form of capital expenditure which brings the parent no return commensurate with its investment value."

Dr. Charles believes that "the crucial problem of maintaining the reproductive vitality of civilization is how to reinstate the child as a functional unit in a planned ecology." What she means, in simpler words, is that if children were less of a burden, if they shared in the work of the family and added to its resources, then there would be more children. The ideal she proposes is one of productive work that begins early in life and of education that continues through maturity—"a society in which children and adults share equally in the activities of production and education." She thinks that such a state of things would be impossible except under socialism. "The conclusion which emerges most clearly from our study is that the laisser-faire economy is a biologically self-destructive arrangement of man's social life. It puts a price upon parenthood. It confers social prestige upon sterility."

MALCOLM COWLEY.

White Folks Are Silly

The Ways of White Folks, by Langston Hughes. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

OCTAVUS ROY COHEN finds colored people very funny, and Julia Peterkin finds them very quaint. Langston Hughes finds white people either sordid and cruel, or silly and sentimental. This indictment is perhaps largely, if not wholly, true. Nevertheless this collection of short stories suffers a little, as a whole, from being based on such a formula. Any formula is too cheap and easy for an artist of Hughes' caliber. Osceola Jones, the Negro pianist, he tells us for instance, did not "stare mystically over the top of a grand piano like white folks and imagine that Beethoven had nothing to do with life," and when she played for her white patroness the latter looked "very cold and white" and "her grand piano seemed like the biggest and heaviest in the world." I doubt that white people—who have, of course, plenty to answer for—do any more mystical staring over the tops of pianos and imagining of silly things about Beethoven than warm, dark-skinned ones, or that their grand pianos are any bigger and heavier.

The best of these stories, however, are very good indeed. "Cora Unashamed," with its direct and shattering impact, its warmth and bitterness, is magnificent. "Home" tells with sharp eloquence of the return of a young Negro violinist from triumphs abroad to a little Missouri town, where he is lynched. "Christmas Eve" is a straightforward and touching sketch of a Negro maid and her small son, reminiscent of the author's "Not Without Laughter," though written with more bitterness. In "Little Dog" Langston Hughes has given old stuff about a frustrated old maid and her dog a new and painful reality, and in "Slave

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on the Block" he has written a rollicking and very funny, though merciless, satire on a certain type of white Negrophile. It is hard to understand why he should have included in this otherwise distinguished collection so heavy-handed and wearisome a satire as "Rejuvenation Through Joy," or so slick and brittle a piece as "A Good Job Gone."

MARTHA GRUENING.

The Future of Diplomacy

Curzon: The Last Phase, 1919-1925, by Harold Nicolson. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 416 pages. $4.50.

THE FINAL volume of Mr. Nicolson's history of British diplomacy from 1870 onwards does not rank with its predecessors. The attempt to make Lord Curzon the central figure in the picture throws it out of perspective, for though Curzon was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 1919 to 1923 he was excluded from the chief theatre of diplomatic action in Europe by Mr. Lloyd George. Mr. Nicolson is a connoisseur of diplomacy, in its old sense of the fine art of negotiation. In his "Portrait of a Diplomatist" he delights in the uncanny skill with which Lord Carnock played upon the strings of the European concert at Algeciras, or wrote the score of the Russian part in the Anglo-Russian-French trio. In the present volume he has chiefly errors, moral and technical, to record, as the result of which—after an unprecedented victory—British prestige "declined from the very summit of authority to a level of impotence such as, since the Restoration, it has seldom reached."

Mr. Nicolson finds the chief reason for this debacle in the assumption of democratic control of foreign affairs by the sovereign people, and the degradation of diplomacy in consequence of its practice by politicians who alternately control, and are controlled by, public opinion. The popular idea that it is the professional diplomats who make war has been shaken by studies of recent conflicts—the Spanish-American, the Boer, the World Wars. As politicians bear the large responsibility for these wars, so also do they for the disastrous peace which followed the greatest of them.

That peace, Mr. Nicolson points out, was made under the spell of two formulas: "the first was the Roman, the formula of *authority;* the second was the American, or democratic, formula of *consent.*" The English democracy had been whipped up to demand of their statesmen the imposition of the first with the ultimate spoils of victory. It was under this mandate that the drastic treaties with Germany and Austria were made. This mood gradually evaporated in an atmosphere of war weariness, until when the Treaty of Sèvres was drafted the formula of authority was without popular will to enforce it.

Lord Curzon, an aristocrat and authoritarian, was the worst agent to carry out the ambiguous policy in which Mr. Lloyd George was adept. The latter, as a member of the Supreme Council, had the inner track as against the Foreign Office, and for three years Curzon had to submit to the ungrateful part of Cassandra. When Lloyd George passed out of the picture, Lord Curzon showed himself an able foreign minister. He was a commanding figure at the Conference of Lausanne. He played his hand skillfully against M. Poincaré in the invasion of the Ruhr and the separatist movement in the Rhineland.

The most important part of Mr. Nicolson's book is his discussion of the function and method of diplomacy under democracy. He is confident that "within the present century democratic diplomacy will create an international state of mind in which public morality will approximate to private morality." One may question whether the approximation will not be due to the descending scale of the latter as much as to ascent of the former. At all events, that time is not yet, and one of the dangers of democratic control of diplomacy is the sentimental assumption that nations are bound by law as are individuals. Other dangers are the subjectivity of the popular mind, the imprecision of such vague gestures as the Kellogg Pact, and irresponsibility resulting in the repudiation of treaty obligations. To minimize these dangers Mr. Nicolson argues that democracy, while exercising full control of *policy* and foreign affairs, will need trained experts in the field of diplomacy proper, that of *negotiation.*

Mr. Nicolson shows his special aptitude for personal sketches, which are always acute and often agreeably malicious, as in the case of Mr. Richard Washburn Child. Among them towers the figure of Lord Curzon, a magnificent anachronism. Mr. Nicolson is just to Curzon's high qualities, moral and intellectual, while admitting his defects, his lack of proportion and imagination. Above all he redeems his hero from the charges of aristocratic coldness and haughtiness to which his bearing and manner gave color. Curzon emerges as a very human person, nowhere more so than in his reaction to Poincaré at the Conference of Paris in 1922, when he burst from the room, and seizing Lord Hardinge by the arm: "Charley," he panted, "I can't bear that horrid little man. I can't bear him. I can't bear him." For once Curzon struck a universal note.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

The Artist and the World

On Interpretation, by Kenneth Burke. Woodstock, N.Y.: The Plowshare: A Literary Periodical of One-Man Exhibits. Vol. 10, No. 1. 25 cents.

IN THE childish wrangles about art and propaganda we have been hearing in recent years, the latest issue is the relationship of art to society. Mr. Kenneth Burke's essay "On Interpretation" is extremely important because it is an adult contribution to this subject. In a few incisive phrases it destroys the nonsensical use of "escape" as a term of abuse, and proceeds to a deep-cutting analysis of the issues. All orientations, Burke points out, are schemes of serviceability, designed to enable us to deal more effectively with our environment. They are built under the conditioning of our past experience and training, which may produce a "trained incapacity" functioning as blindness in handling new problems. Such orientations may be more or less satisfactory, but to label those we disapprove of as "rationalizations" or "escape mechanisms" (when from some kinds of difficulty escape may be the only rational course) is itself an escape from the rigors of exact analysis.

Works of art create and communicate orientation, but they can do so only in a society where symbols and their emotional connotations are fairly homogeneous and stable—a condition not true of the chaos of modern industrialism. The artist ought therefore to prefer, and work for, an ordered, humane society. Burke believes that "the only coherent and organized movement making for the subjection of the technological genius"—which is largely responsible for present-day confusion—is Communism. Its real content he regards as utilizing "resources for the ends of humane living" under a homogeneous culture. Although it would be absurd to restrict art to such uses, it may rightly

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be the sword of Communism, but mainly because Communism promises ultimately the kindliest home for art. This argument neatly turns upside down the usual notions of the role of art under Communism. If the relationships between a stable culture and a triumphant art which Mr. Burke suggests are not definitively certain, they are elaborated with a degree of insight that goes far beyond attacks on propaganda and ivory towers, and makes all such criticism appear infantile and beside the point. No contemporary writing penetrates more deeply into the basic connections between art and culture, and none does so with such brilliance.

EDGAR JOHNSON.

A Lesson for Radicals

A History of Bolshevism, from Marx to the First Five Year Plan, by Arthur Rosenberg. New York: Oxford University Press. 260 pages. $3.75.

ANY SIGNIFICANT philosophic formula provides great value and great difficulty. Its applicability to diverse phenomena makes possible the shaping of them into a comprehensive pattern full of meaning and order. Its universality creates the problem of determining exactly how specific experiences shall be set into the whole pattern correctly.

That Marxism is just such a formula Dr. Rosenberg completely proves. Cut sharp and deep with characteristic tools of the Marxian craftsman, his book is a century-long bas-relief of Europe fresh in perspective, symmetrical in outline—a decidedly worth-while achievement.

But in the grinding of his particular axe, the author reveals also the difficulty of applying Marxism to concrete, individual events. Although allowing himself numerous exaggerations, he tries to be fair and to admit that Soviet Russia is striding ahead. It is his opinion, however, that since the death of Lenin the policies of Bolshevism have too often violated the underlying doctrine. Party dictatorship rather than democracy, state capitalism rather than socialism, national interest rather than international revolution—these and other faults Rosenberg, like Trotsky, finds with Stalin's regime. But he does not give adequate attention to the Bolshevik side of the case that a strong dictatorship, and a modified state capitalism, are genuinely Marxian. Nor does he prove convincingly that the program of the Communist International, however mistaken in tactics, was contradictory in principle.

Rosenberg's quarrel with Neo-Leninism is only one interesting illustration of the fruitful but hazardous generality of the Marxian formula. The same problem of particular application runs through the whole history of Bolshevism. Lenin often drastically altered his policies within the framework of an apparently consistent point of view. He insisted, for example, that according to dialectical materialism it was necessary to support a bourgeois order in Russia so that a communist society could eventually emerge. And Marxism may suddenly disclose to some of our own radicals that before the United States can go communistic we must, dialectically, pass through monopoly state capitalism. "Let us," they will then say, "get it over with. Hail Fascism!" If radicals do not want to see Marxism applied thus, let them beware of a new split in their ranks—the justification for which may come from Marx himself. A great service of Rosenberg's study is that, without intending expressly to do so, it points this lesson and this warning.

THEODORE B. BRAMELD.

Pathfinders of Equality

Woman in Soviet Russia, by Fannina W. Halle. New York: The Viking Press. 425 pages. $4.50.

MISS HALLE is an Austrian, born in Russia, and her knowledge of Russia's history and language is profound. She is also a trained sociologist; hence her account is not confined to the superficial observation of a few women encountered in Moscow, but traces the development of Russian women from earliest times. In addition, the author is gifted with a style that is lucid and moving even in translation. The historical method enables us to understand fully the psychology of the modern Russian woman and the full meaning of her position in Soviet society. For example, it was the generation of woman students in the sixties and seventies, hammering at the doors of the universities and seeking knowledge in European cities, which helped to forge the first revolutionary circles. The march of Marxism in Russia, beginning in the late nineties, enlisted working women in strike and revolutionary activities; the purely feminist movement in Russia was more quickly absorbed in the labor movement than was the case in western Europe. The Bolshevik revolution endowed women with equal rights and imposed on them the same duties as men.

How this has worked out in sixteen years' practice is the central theme of the book under review. Miss Halle gives us the richest material and clearest analysis of it so far available in English, and it becomes clear that the Soviet Union has found practical solutions for many age-old world problems. Prostitution, while not entirely exterminated, has been for all practical purposes abolished, and the public attitude toward it has been completely revolutionized. Birth control and abortion have been legalized without retarding the mounting birth rate, while the stigma of illegitimacy has been removed from "illegitimate" children.

From her extraordinary array of facts, Miss Halle concludes: "Something new in history is arisen, a society based upon the absolutely equal rights of the sexes, and in process of developing ever richer and more varied forms."

CHARMION VON WIEGAND.

Wordsworth's Sister

Dorothy Wordsworth, by Ernest de Selincourt. New York: Oxford University Press. 442 pages. $7.

NO DOUBT this de Selincourt "Dorothy Wordsworth" is in one sense the definitive "biography." It is as good as thorough workmanship and the discovery of new letters can make it. Yet, in another sense, it is scarcely biography at all, but rather the accurate record of painfully conscientious research over a period of many years. Mr. de Selincourt has been in no hurry to collect his facts and now he has set them all down before us. One is not, however, inclined to take his opinions seriously, for the book rests on the assumption that no world exists outside his library and his subject matter. He presents a thick document, loading each page with generous quotation from Dorothy's letters and journals, proving again and again that Wordsworth's sister was a woman of extraordinary gifts: a valuable human being whose casual insight was on a level with the poet's, whose talents for concrete observation were of greater sharpness and penetration than his. It is true, as Mr. de Selincourt remarks, that Dorothy, like her brother William, outlived herself, and that in this fact lie roots

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of tragedy. And one is able to sympathize with the present biographer's refusal to psychoanalyze the brother-sister relationship too closely. The real difficulty with Mr. de Selincourt's study lies in its weight and an academic fear of "good writing"; he deliberately sets forth to be as dull as his material will allow, and since the daily routine of the Wordsworth household is not dramatic but is of continuous growth and decline, the narrative element in the book is so slight as to be negligible. One must read between the lines concerning the importance of Wordsworth's relationship to Annette, for Mr. de Selincourt defends his obvious hypocrisies. One must take Dorothy's emotions concerning her brother's marriage at their face value and close one's eyes to everything but written evidence. One sees, however, how compact the family circle grew, each member of it feeding upon the others, and the enormous catastrophe implied by the death of William's children within it. Is it a wonder that Dorothy, who was the original model for many of the "Lucy" poems and the observer behind them, died a little mad? This biography, in addition to a valuable collection of notes and a full index, contains a beautiful map of the Lake Country. HORACE GREGORY.

Books in Brief

The Second House from the Corner, by Max Miller. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 254 pages. $2.50.

MR. MILLER has not wasted his time as a newspaper feature writer and columnist. He has learned to write a thousand-word piece around almost any subject. He has mastered the art of capitalizing on his own private personality and life, and making his readers love it. In "The Second House from the Corner" he is still quite near the waterfront and, like Morley, Woollcott, et al, still being an essayist-columnist in Lamb's clothing. But now he is no longer the ship reporter he was. In this book he has graduated from all that and attained the status of a responsible citizen with a New House, a sort of ivory tower with modern conveniences. In carefully measured slices, he sets forth his dreams, his worries and the oddities that surround him. He makes you feel in a neighborly way that he may have been cut out to go sailing on the ships he used to meet at port, but that this life of pottering around the house or catching lobsters in the nearby ocean really suits him fine. Events like talking with a real prostitute, or worrying because his wife might have a baby, seem tremendously exciting and important in his life. He is quiet in manner, so much so that you can hear bits of his philosophy dropping like dew over his pages. Sometimes his pieces are built around points that sound stale, such as his story of the man who was always having ridiculous tragedies, finally dying from a wound inflicted by a fish. But on the whole, there is a beautiful freshness about Miller's writing that arouses your sympathy, even when you are damning him for his smugness. J. M.

Corner Shop, by Philip Keeley. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

The "Corner Shop" of the Widow Brenner was more than a shop. For her, it was apotheosis, the focus of all her avarice, her ambition, her hard love of dominance. For her children it was a symbol of bondage and servility. Desperately they feel life drawing away from them, and in striving for release, they botch their young hopes, fleeing to war and the pandemonium of London life with the echo of their estranged mother's shrill force hanging over them. The novel widens into large and impressive themes, but somehow fails to bring out fully the organic nature of the strange conflict between the mother and her embittered children. The tragedy of the confused love-hate is in the atmosphere, but only rarely becomes clean and incisive. Situations and ideas are thrown out in a potential form that fails of complete development, and in the end we get only faintly the acuteness of genuine tragedy. A. K.

Contemporary American Literature and Religion, by Halford E. Luccock. Chicago: Willett, Clark and Company. 300 pages. $2.

Although Dr. Luccock decries the lack of religious influence on modern American writers, he is no deep-water Baptist calling for celestial phenomena to do them in. Nor does he side with the Humanists. "Humanism," he says, "has been weighed and found wanting. The disintegration in literature which so pains Mr. Babbitt and Mr. More is not primarily in literature but in life itself." He is, in the main, a sound critic and expresses an unorthodox regard for such grim and ungodly writers as William Faulkner, T. S. Stribling and Sinclair Lewis. Dr. Luccock sees the novelist as "an indispensable diagnostician for anyone who would seek to heal the hurts of humanity," and he commends the lot of American writers to the clergy, who "had [they] not exhausted their spiritual energies in denunciation, would have known more accurately the sickness they desired to heal." It is interesting to note that the writers most praised by the author are women: Edna Ferber, Dorothy Canfield and Mrs. Wharton, although to his credit it must be said that he does not mention Harold Bell Wright, Dorothy Scarborough or Lloyd (Magnificent Obsession) Douglas. L. B.

The House in the Hills, by Simonne Ratel. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

Here is the recital of another tragedy of French domestic life, the success of which (it won the Prix Interallié) is a little difficult to understand. The involved and plodding study of a woman's intense suffering in an unhappy marriage, it has the air of something mechanical and unreal. Isabelle Durras is married to a grotesque: a sadistic and boorish pedant. We are interminably overwhelmed by the declarations of her unhappiness, of the mingled dread and hate that her children bear their father. And yet, though the novel is devoted to nothing but the theme of suffering, it leaves the reader entirely unmoved. There is no fire behind the smoke; we are told that there is pain and incredible despair in this house in the hills, but it becomes a bit difficult to believe when we feel no life, no moving cycle of human beings behind this stilted declaration of poignancy. A. K.

I Commit to the Flames, by Ivor Brown. New York: Harper and Brothers. 240 pages. $2.

What Mr. Brown commits to imaginary flames in the pages of his short, evenly tempered book of incessant invective, are political "shirtings," Lawrentianism, the blood of Hemingway, psychoanalysis, Ezra Pound, the new education, new poetry, National Socialism and other familiar flogging-posts of this familiar litany. What he most hates is modernism, still-born old modernism, which we have so often seen uselessly splattered with and by critics, to the tune of words like "cacophany," "contortions" and "caterwauling," in reference to subjects as widely scattered as

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Josephine Baker and Stalin. Exactly what is it that has steamed Mr. Brown up to this extent, aside from the fact that these things were not taught him at his mother's knee? Most likely, it is a question of outraged taste. One feels that his resentment over National Socialism would be much relieved if "Sentimental Tommy" were made compulsory reading for the Hitler Youth; and that the Soviet Union would annoy him less, if "The School for Scandal" were put on and enjoyed in Moscow. J. N.

The Horizons of Thought, by George P. Conger. Princeton University Press. 367 pages. $5.

In his "World of Epitomizations" Professor Conger distinguished six realms: logic, number, geometry-kinematics, matter, life and mind—each exhibiting structures and processes to be found in the realms preceding it in this series. The realm of mind is the most inclusive one, possessing the highest degree of cumulative coördination. The present book is an unconventional and highly suggestive treatment of the epistemology correlative with the emergent metaphysics discussed in the earlier volume. Its thesis is that in the process of exploring the structures of the world, our thinking involves fundamental dualities or polarities at all points. Thinking is a selective activity that necessarily neglects phases of subject matter; and this fact has implications for the nature of the world we think about as well as for the nature of our thinking. This insistence on the relevance of context for every analysis is a fruitful and important idea, and Professor Conger shows by a painfully laborious citation of current discussions how problems remain unsolved because such contexts are neglected. But in writing both the present and earlier volumes he has scarcely done justice to himself or his insights. The two volumes are almost unreadable because of the fragmentary way in which problems and discussions are reported and handled. E. N.

Contributors

OLIVER CARLSON, formerly research associate in the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago, was an organizer for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union in Mississippi last summer.

VINCENT MCHUGH is the author of two novels, "Sing Before Breakfast" and "Touch Me Not."

GUY IRVING BURCH is director of the Population Reference Bureau and secretary of the American Eugenics Society.

MARTHA GRUENING is a former assistant secretary and field research worker for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In that capacity she has investigated race riots and compiled material for "Thirty Years of Lynching."

THEODORE BRAMELD is a professor at Long Island University.

CHARMION VON WIEGAND is the author of many articles on the Soviet Union.

HORACE GREGORY, who will soon return from England to give a course at Sarah Lawrence College, is the author of two volumes of verse, "Chelsea Rooming House" and "No Retreat." A third book, "Phoenix in Broadcloth," is announced for late fall publication by Covici, Friede.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Jerre Mangione, Alfred Kazin, Laurence Bell, James Neugass and Ernest Nagel.

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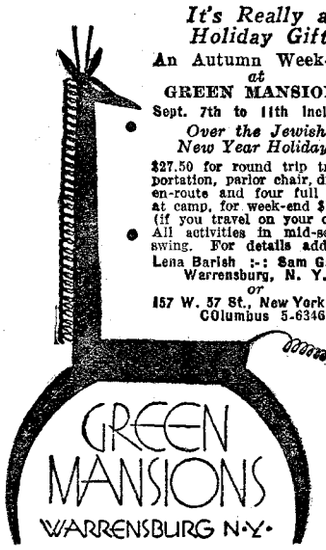
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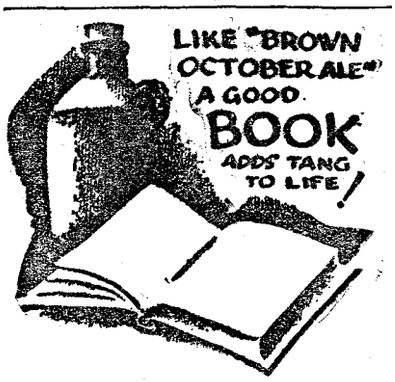

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